



The Dancing God

In the Grotta dei Cervi of Porto Badisco, in the depths of Salento's surface, some paintings date back approximately 8000 years. According to paleontologists who have studied it, the site was a sanctuary of the Great Mother visited by diverse populations from all over the Mediterranean, as proven by the presence of votive offerings, burnt cereals and animal meat. At the bottom of the cave, among figures of humans, animals, and abstract signs, is a character with a disjointed body and a head covered by what seem to be feathers or plant fibers. It has been described as a dancing god and as a shaman (or a female *sciamana*). In both cases, it was meant to allude to the manifestation, in the dancing body, of a power other than that of the human subject.

What we see in the image is a human body that sways and loses its center and its symmetry. In that momentum, with the feathered head, it seems a hybrid between a human and other animals. It is an image that could be on an African or American rock, where, in fact, similar ones are found among those that a global figurative civilization has painted with mineral and animal pigments for tens of thousands of years. Its gesture seems to unite humanity as a primordial universal.

As we contemplate it in silence, we struggle to relive the sensory experience that must have accompanied the act of the one who descended there, in the dark belly of the rock, to trace the figure with bat guano. That scene is lost. We can only conjecture what happened, articulate it in our language, imagine and evoke sensations based on remote parallels to what has been found in other Neolithic and Paleolithic caves. To aid us in this effort, we can refer to the rituals of historical Mediterranean cultures, where for millennia, men and women, also here in Salento, ritually engaged in frantic dances. We examine traces and narrative documents, but perhaps in the history of our body there is a way to find the lost voice of the dancing god.

The Empty Caves

The Grotta dei Cervi was discovered in 1970 by a group of speleologists. It was a time of great enthusiasm for prehistoric art research, which had started about a century earlier. André Leroi-Gourhan had recently published two fundamental books: *Gesture and Speech*, a study where he linked the development of human linguistic and technical abilities to the freeing of the hands with an upright position, and *The Dawn of European Art*, where he attempted a symbolic interpretation of these first forms of artistic expression, based on a statistical analysis of all figures, and hypothesized an evolution towards an increasingly realistic style. However, the exploration of other sites has disproved this interpretation. Notably, the Chauvet cave, discovered in 1994, contains extraordinary and powerful paintings of horses, lions, and aurochs that seem to take shape and run on twisted and branching walls. Radiocarbon

dating places many paintings to 37,000 years ago. In the face of this wonderful and moving discovery, it has been argued that “realism” predated the evolution towards more schematic styles attested in the Neolithic, like that of Porto Badisco: a path that recalls the one from modern painting to the artistic avant-gardes of the twentieth century. “After Altamira, everything is decadence,” Picasso jokingly said.

But contemporary comparisons can confuse us (and apparently the anecdote about Picasso is a fabrication). As discoveries and dating of prehistoric finds continue to reopen the question, hypotheses about the meaning of those figures remain uncertain: there have been talks of primitive forms of art and ideographic writing, of attempts to map the territory, of ritual symbols to favor hunting, to represent myths, to celebrate the mystery of generation, to accompany visions and shamanic journeys. Our categories – game, magic, technique, art, religion, philosophy – seem unsuitable for unraveling the meaning of the images. It is hard to imagine that art and magic, game and religion, were distinct experiences as they are for us. Those cultural powers were perhaps still part of a whole, in an embryonic state.

Some facts are certain: many paintings lie deep inside caves, dark and oppressive, and challenging to access, as is the one in Porto Badisco. To create them, people withdrew from the surface, seeking experiences in an inhospitable depth, far from the goods and evils of the above, leaving behind the commitments of everyday life and gathering in cavities to evoke its actors and actions. A strong motivation was needed to descend there, light a fire, and start scratching and painting the walls. The sensory deprivation of those environments could favor the emergence of psychological needs and fragilities. According to palethnologists, ceremonies were probably held in front of the figures, music, songs, and stories were heard. Flutes have been found, and the environments usually have excellent acoustics. That silence seems like a dormant power for those lucky enough to descend. Down there, we face the question again: how to evoke those primitive experiences?

Childhood and History

In the Seventies, it was common to come across images of the Altamira caves in Spain in school books, as it happened to me as a child, and I have not stopped thinking about them. Philosophers and linguists have seen the trace of a fundamental layer of thought in those images, in which figures and signs are still fused together in an aggregate, which precedes the articulation of our belief in words and linear discourses. This is what happens in fantasizing, in dreaming. Giambattista Vico already spoke of a poetic and figurative phase of thought, typical of “wise beasts” and ancient people, which would be experienced in each individual's childhood. In the nineteenth century, it was common to speak of an “infancy of humanity,” and this metaphor captures something true, or so it seems if I go back to my own experience.



Deer Cave, Womb, Mother, Star, Italy 2019
70 x 88 cm

In summer, I would go to Puglia, I would “go down,” as it is said among the children of emigrants who return to visit their family. During the ritual siesta, after lunch, the adults would retire to sleep, sheltering from the heat in the coolness of the rooms, and I would stay alone, unable to contain restless energy. I would draw the living room curtains and start jumping, waving my arms in rapid circumlocutions. With my mouth, I would rumble, whisper, and articulate fragments of stories I invented; in a low voice, I would animate them. I imagined mostly fights, raids in distant places, and adventurous searches for magical objects. I would get excited, heated up; I would sweat. On the table, I would sometimes keep atlases or illustrated books of animals and monsters, from which I drew inspiration. When the aunts got up, I was a little embarrassed about my agitated, inexplicable actions. Still, I often continued without losing that momentum of physical and narrative enthusiasm. Once, I started jumping in the middle of the public park. It was an outlet, a game, a creation. For relatives, I was “spitting”, acting crazy. I kept them at a distance by whirling and jumping, tracing a magic circle, rejecting any desecration of that happy abandonment.

From the memory of that game, original creative ball of yarn, I draw a thread to understand others. To that kinetic reverie, I remember it well, I alternated swims in the sea, the drawing of strange

characters and maps, role-playing games, video games, reading, and first sexual fantasies. At some point in my early teens, in that same semi-darkness, I began to write a fantasy novel. Of course, I do not believe I can project this set of actions of a twentieth-century child onto prehistory without question. Still, in these memories, I find a clue, halfway between natural and cultural history, that different human activities coexist connected in us as means to channel an identical vital need.

Gone are the days when so-called primitive men were considered idiotic apes and primitive people were considered remnants of the archaic past in a world finally evolved to the values of art, religion, and science. The intelligence of our species was fully formed when someone, in moments of rest around the fire, found the occasion to gather pigments and trace figures on stone, chisels to engrave them or sculpt statuettes from rock and musical instruments from bones. It is a characteristic of our species to be able to abstract ourselves from the flow of actions, ruminate on the past, anticipate the future, and imagine other presents. This possibility is inseparable from gesture and voice, with which we indicate absent entities and actions. Dance is based on these same abilities: it draws pictures in space with our flesh. Dancing immerses us in a muscular and sensory flow that is no longer aimed at surviving dangers and procuring food: it fulfills other needs.

Dances, Chants, Cures

I recognize the episode of a vast history in my spontaneous gestures, like each of us. For over a thousand years, in southern Italy, women and men have healed ailments and satisfied fantasies by dancing and singing. They used to say that a spider, the *taranta*, had bitten them. Then musicians had to come, with guitars, tambourines, and violins, to accompany them in a dance of repeated impulses, agitated and sensual. Usually, it happened at the beginning of summer when the heat starts to oppress, as if a seasonal rhythm beats down the mood. In the mid-twentieth century, the “taranted” people of Puglia were still dancing. One of them, Maria di Nardò, can be seen in Gianfranco Mingozzi’s film “La taranta”. You can listen to the pizzica that accompanied her in the recordings that came out with the book “La terra del rimorso” by Ernesto de Martino in 1961. These documents show traces of an unsettling and ambivalent experience. There were pain, burning desires, and bewilderment, expressed in cries and laments, tremors, and repeated hip blows. But there was also a liberating joy, which became dance step, song, and boisterous display of the body.

This ambivalence, as is common in ancient ritual practices all over the world, corresponded to a real dramatized split, in which different characters come to life in the flesh. The tarantated women whispered and screamed, speaking to each other or with St. Paul, who traditionally was their protector in the Galatina area. In Sardinia, the males bitten by the spider, the *argia*, dressed up as females. The ritual context guaranteed that this play of voices and clothes did not lead to a pathological dissociation nor to a scandal: it was part of the ritual, free exploration of the self, which was welcomed by the community with attentive looks and music. There was a canonical repertoire of songs that became an artistic repertoire, in which singers gave voice to a sense of suffering and grief, asking for grace.

But whose were those voices, those bodies? The bite of the spider – symbolic, imaginary – wounded people belonging to marginal social groups: tobacco workers, women with unhappy marriages, and tormented teenagers. The bite was the trigger for a mythical and ritual script, which was used to cure ailments of various kinds. Often there was an uncontrollable erotic impulse underneath, as the pulsating movements and some songs testify. One of these says: “Oh Santu Paulu meu de le tarante. Ca pizzichi le caruse ‘mmenzu ll’anche”, “oh my St. Paul of the tarantulas, you pinch the girls between their hips.” The Christian saint was a mask, an alibi, under which there was a poisonous animal, a demon lodged in the body.

This refers to an even broader and more ancient history. “Dance epidemics” broke out in Europe in the Middle Ages around the feasts of Saints such as John and Vitus. The authorities of cities like Strasbourg and Ulm arranged for the obsessed to be gathered in specific spaces and accompanied by musicians to

let off steam. The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who in his *The Birth of Tragedy* wanted to recover the ancient spirit of the Dionysian in the bourgeois society of the late nineteenth century, hailed in those popular ranks the processions of Ancient Greece, in which “not only does the bond between man and man tighten, but also estranged, hostile or subjugated nature celebrates its reconciliation festival with its lost son.” Behind the obsession of the Christian world, often suspected of being demonized, were the Maenads, the followers of Dionysus, the god of wine and intoxication. “The mad Dyonisus,” Homer calls him. To the violent vital impulse embodied by that foreign and wild god, which erupts from the self and ignores social norms, Greek civilization gave hospitality in specific festivals, from which theater was born.

The legacy of Dionysus, the god who unties and liberates, has an ambivalence that looks familiar in the light of this story: already Euripides defined him as a god “sweetest and most terrible,” who brings joy and loves the young, but at the same time can break the balance of life, bring death. The “epidemic,” that is, “the arrival in the country” of that god, has continued and continues to spread in other forms.

Thinking back to this long prelude today, to the *tarantati*, the obsessed, and the Maenads, one detail stands out. Those crises, and their respective musical and choral remedies, occurred in groups. The individual crisis was staged in front of a community that gathered around the sick person. At the time of the available recordings of those rituals, in Salento, these musical cures took place at home or in the chapel of St. Paul in Galatina. But previously, these were collective events that occurred outdoors, in the woods, near the water. So it had been in the bacchic epidemics in Magna Graecia and ancient Rome, in Germanic Middle Ages, and so it happened in many other similar rites on different shores of the Mediterranean, like the Ethiopian zar, the Nigerian bori, the voodoo on the so-called Slave Coast, from where those rites of possession passed into the Americas, and still take place. The unifying trait of this planetary history is this: the community took care of the discomfort. For the unhappy and restless, it was an opportunity to vent and be watched, to represent a drama, say something unspeakable, and tell a story with the body and the voice.

From this perspective, the Puglia of my childhood appears as a more decadent and hedonistic period, but at the same time it is more lonely. My dances and the outbursts of my budding sexuality did not summon orchestras of musicians but evoked sarcastic comments. There was a guy who screamed every night in the town square; I heard him every evening under the balcony. He was furious and aggressive, saying indecipherable words, scratching his voice with an effort of which I could feel the tenacity. However, his outburst was not welcomed by a community willing to listen to his story, and after a few years he ended up in a clinic.

“Allu mari mi portati / se volete che mi sanati,” “You have to take me to the sea/if you want me to heal,” thus in the 17th century, the *tarantated* sang a lament of love. Even today, those who go down to Puglia go to the sea, and lie down between umbrellas and disco bars. Pizzica is joyful and recreational music. But the heartbreaking stories it used to allow to come to voice no longer find a ritual space; they remain locked in the thoughts of the bathers.

The Voice and The Language

Let us return to the painted caves, which I described as a retreat from the world similar to the one I realized as a child, and we find the same difference: those prehistoric experiences were undoubtedly made in groups. There are numerous abstract signs on the walls of the Cave of the Deer, perhaps endowed with meaning but similar to linguistic signs. To think of them as inscribed by a solitary person is impossible. And the same can be said with certainty of even older paintings, like the vast scenes of the Lascaux cave, with five-meter-long animals surrounding the spectator. That spectacle was produced by many men or women, and it was most probably not meant as a work for the enjoyment of a few, nor is there any reason to think that the spectators gathered in those caves remained silent.

Prehistoric men, by freeing their hands, began to gesticulate, and in the meantime, thanks to genetic characteristics and the anatomy of the phonatory apparatus, they could articulate their voice. The scene hypothesized in the 18th century by the philosopher Condillac in order to explain the origin of language as a relationship comes to mind: there are two children who, living together, express the emotions aroused by the image of something – like the drawing of an animal – with sounds uttered by the voice, and emphasize these sounds with gestures. Over time, they get used to associating sounds with things indicated by signs: they memorize the first words.

Many contemporary linguists, like Stephen Corballis, consider this conjecture fundamentally correct. The palethnologist Steven Mithen arrives at similar conclusions starting from archaeological and biological data: the verbal language of *Homo sapiens* would have evolved from a mimetic language accompanied by inarticulate vocalizations, which he calls “hmmmmm” language (i.e., holistic, manipulative, musical, and mimetic). This type of language would have been characteristic also of other species like Neanderthals. The ability to utter sounds to refer to absent entities would have many crucial consequences: it would allow, among other things, to imagine another world, an afterlife, to invent myths. The ability to inscribe figures and signs would depend on the same linguistic ability. Graphic traces and sound traces originate from the same capacity.

Today, if we imagine prehistoric caves as hermitages where a man painted silently, we are mistaken. We might be misled because – as the philosopher Adriana Cavarero has shown – Western thought for

millennia has underestimated or ignored the physical component of language, focusing on ideas and logos, which abstract from this corporeal grounding pretending their autonomy. Only the voice expresses individuality rooted in the body. The graphic trace, which refers to images and meanings, loses it. Thus, the movement of the “dancing god” of Porto Badisco and countless other Neolithic paintings and engravings is nothing but the immobile trace of a real impetus of the bodies, the negative of a life lived, spoken, and sung.

Community and Silence

That there was dancing and talking in prehistoric caves reminds us of two things: first, the enormous gallery of images distributed around the Earth was the backdrop for meetings, discussions, and stories. The practice of storytelling that is typical of our species began around the fire, and perhaps the figures were illustrations of myths, recurring characters of daytime situations that were recombined in the trembling light of the flames. Some caves, like Lascaux and Chauvet, seem like amphitheaters for ritual or dramatic actions. Even children were taken deep into the darkness, as proven by footprints and handprints: perhaps there were initiations.

This leads to another insight: communities were consolidated by sharing stories and discourses. Here is the political aspect, which rites and dances have preserved.

Let us go back to the dancing god of Mediterranean antiquity, Dionysus. When the Bacchanalia spread in the Roman Republic – as the ancient historian Livy tells us – the Senate feared that these gatherings would form a “second people,” mainly composed of Etruscans, Neapolitans, and Greeks “of obscure birth”: foreigners. In other words, these meetings could not be reduced to a mute Bacchic tumult of bodies and senses, they certainly were accompanied by discourses, and these were capable of forming new solidarities, a political community alternative to the Roman hegemony. The voice, in fact, moves fluidly from moan to song, from call to dialogue, and the dialogue between those excluded from civic life can lead to conflict. First, this led to slander: at these parties, it was said, rapes, depravations, murders were committed. Then it led to the ban, of which a written testimony was found on an inscription in Calabria. The authorities banned the gatherings of the plebeians.

This pattern would be repeated many times in history. Brazilian landowners feared the meetings and dances of the slaves, which took place in the woods or the churches. In Haiti, at one of those gatherings, in the Caiman forest, the revolution was decided, while a possessed woman shook her body and, wielding a dagger, called forth the death of the whites. This danger had to be prevented, or at least the slaves who pretended to celebrate the mass had to be closely watched. The same happened in Brazil under the dictatorship with the Afro-American ritu-

als of candomblè, meeting places for individuals who had to remain isolated in their marginality: their gathering was a threat, announced by the violent motion of bodies, by the disunity of the subject in trance, since obedience requires self-control of the ego.

Even today, in republican Italy, the government has banned raves, illegal parties of ecstasy seekers who challenge the norms on which public order is based: exhausting work, rhetoric of the human capital and high performance, social immobility. The ban, as two thousand years ago, has been preceded by false insinuations about crimes and aberrations that would have occurred at those parties. Let's look at these historical facts from the perspective of the ancient tragedy of the *Bacchae*: Dionysus leads the Menads to the city of Thebes, but he is arrested by the king Pentheus. Those wild women must stay out of the city, out of the civil space. He will break free and the king will be doomed. The ancient chorus commented on the drama by singing, and drew a lesson from it: that natural energy cannot be denied. Sooner or later Dionysus, Bromius “the noisy”, erupts in other forms and makes himself heard. We must accept it, or it will break every bank.

When the rejection of that energy is uncompromising, when every manifestation of it is prevented, then silence severs social ties, orthodoxy demands control of bodies and voices. Such a ban is very different from the silence of the twilight in which I retreated as a child, and in which we all gather when we temporarily interrupt our relations with others and speak to ourselves. This private silence accompanies a natural suspension of the flow of commitments and obligations, it is the undertow that responds to the waves of life and conversation. We sleep, dream, fantasize, paint. We may even whisper in the shadows, like in a cave, to distil the meaning of things. In this silence, narrative writing is also born: an introspective transposition of an originally oral tale.

Animals

This necessary, natural silence is common to us and other animals. Like us, other animals express themselves with their voice, in many cases they are capable of linguistically articulated messages, and in certain circumstances they choose to remain silent. The closest comparison is with primates, organized in social groups and capable of using tools and semantic codes, even though their vocal apparatus makes them incapable of speaking as we do. Observing chimpanzees in Tanzania, Primatologist Jane Goodall hypothesized that these animals have a sense of the sacred. She observed them going under waterfalls, swinging on vines, throwing stones in the water, sitting to contemplate it. She became convinced that in front of waterfalls and sunsets, chimpanzees sometimes experience a sense of “reverence and wonder”. A historian of religions, James Harrod, revisited the question and focused on the cases where chimpanzees remain silent: after the death of a loved one, during hunting or exploring

unknown territory. He tried to verbalize the sense of this silence: “We are beyond the limit, on the other side”. Silence introduces an opening towards a possible elsewhere, a magical world, dangerous and promising. This might be a place we share with animals when we ruminate and phantasize, when we feel lost, when we draw; and perhaps something similar happened in prehistoric caves, when voices ceased and the eyes pointed at painted animals.

The figures of the earliest prehistoric paintings privileged one theme among many possible: the non-human animal. In that graphic gesture, attention was fixed on the world's other inhabitants. To be sure, the absence of other human individuals was well-known and felt (these were civilizations with burials and funerary cults). This strikes us even more today, living in an artificial environment where human figures and faces continually appear and pop up. The proximity of non-humans is reduced almost entirely to domesticated species. We neglect the voices of animals, reducing them to insignificant background noise. On the other hand, those voices must have been familiar to those men who devoted so much time to observing and imitating them. The animals in flesh and bones – buffalos, lions, rhinoceroses, horses – were extracted from the flow of events and thoughts, painted by passing hands over the rock, tracing forms with charcoal, ocher, guano. They were remade in images, in order to contemplate or to evoke them. Rock art turned those tunnels into accesses to a world populated by living beings, or by their spirits. Often vulva symbols underlined the rock openings. The cave was the place where the original animal generation was staged. Cosmic womb. Nature.

In certain cases, one played with the idea that animals and humans could merge into the same body: the resemblance of living beings suggested a secret homogeneity. On a stone tooth that descends from the ceiling, in the deepest room of Chauvet, we recognize, with astonishment and dismay, a minotaur. Theriomorphic figures were the fruits of our capacity to recombine the elements of reality, and this in turn was associated with linguistic ability: the same voice that makes it possible to refer to non-existent things can also envisage a possible fusion with other animals. It breaks down the fabric of reality and recomposes it.

According to many palethnologists, behind those theriomorphic figures there was more: shamanic experiences of trance provided evidence that humans can take on other animal forms, and draw on the energies of other species. This conjecture depends on the observation of historical cultures, in America and Asia, where the oral tradition has reported myths in which animals and men were originally identical. Here we find the reason why that figure from the Grotto of the Deer has also been called a “shaman”. Besides, in the Mediterranean, it must still be remembered that Dionysus would present himself as a bull-god, and his mythical followers



Deer Cave, Atomic Labyrinth, Italy 2019
85 x 107 cm



Grotta dei Cervi, Sole Luna, Italia 2019
64 x 80 cm

nursed wolves. Dionysus is the spokesman of an ancient wisdom about the commonality of humans and animals, marked by the voice. All living beings have a soul, *psyché*, that is, breath, which allows them to speak. In Hebrew, the breath of God, *ruah*, gives life to man. Around the 5th century, in Greece, people began to speak of *aloga*, the animals lacking logos, not speaking and therefore not rational, in order to determine the human difference. This became a prejudice that is hard to eradicate, with which we have continued to reckon since Darwin. The voice of the prehistoric caves told of a different world, both primitive and closer to biology.

Trace, Gesture, Voice

I return to the childhood memories that have served as my guiding thread. At that age, I drew a lot, and somewhere I kept some drawings. There were mainly animals and monsters. That theme was perhaps inspired by a natural disposition, but education also favored it. Children were taught to draw in school, and books for children included plenty of animals. Today, most humans are born in cities. We are often taught to draw woods and whales on a sheet, icons of a world that is moving away in space, in time, along with its inhabitants that are going extinct.

I don't remember what I thought and imagined when I made those drawings. I remember fragments, attempts at narrations, which I hinted at when I started jumping, pretending voices of characters, animating a world that was not yet fully categorized. It was a workshop from which writing would have resulted. However, back then the word still coexisted with the image and the momentum of the body, a dance. "Soon the whole earth will dance," prophesies the chorus of the *Bacchantes*. In reality, dance has always been a primitive gesture of humans, who are born waving arms and legs, grabbing at the void, and before knowing who they are, they announce themselves with a cry.

So there was animal instinct behind those movements and expressions, but there was also an education, an oral tradition of speeches that I surely heard and influenced me. Those were the years when people started talking about ecological consciousness, and these speeches conspired with my echolalia. As Zadie Smith reminded us, a narrator does not have a single voice of her own: she is inhabited by other voices. Personal identity is formed through other stories. In mine flowed the concern for the extinction of other living beings. An unforgettable confidence made me answer, to whoever asked me who I was, what my quality was: "I love animals".

The puzzle of our childhood drawings is similar to what we find when we consider first documents of human imagination. For thousands of years, humans have sought spaces to animate images, tell stories, play, sing. Now we are left with pictures and signs. But there was a community of oral speeches and pictorial styles. Without it, the pictorial technique would not have been handed down, there would have

been a lack of instructions and discussions on what had to be done in front of the stones, how to move, what to evoke, what to say. Moreover, even the way to access the caves is something no human could have found by simple instinct. People came to the Grotta dei Cervi from all over the Mediterranean, and archaeology proves that movements and traffic over huge distances were common in prehistory. People talked about that sanctuary and those mythical figures – just as I do today – and attention was focused on their meaning. Figures like the dancing god can remind us something about our individual life, about its latent potentialities. Still, they are first of all something else: the trace of the oldest oral traditions of humanity.

In late July 2019, after four years of waiting, I entered the Cave at Porto Badisco with my analog camera obscura, the same place the discoverer named Enea's Cavern and that we know today as the Deer Cave. I wonder what the humans who lit a fire there 6000 years ago would have called this cave. The "Nameless" is what I am searching for and is at the core of what I will show you here. During the same period when I entered the Deer Cave at the most eastern cliff of the Italian peninsula, the skies of our planet registered the peak of air traffic in the history of flight. More than 225 thousand planes were in the air at the same time. In the silence of the cave and in the dark abyss of time, their noise was not audible. They had stopped before truly stopping.

Caves have the power to modify time and alter space. Perhaps, during those very same weeks, the pathogen originally from bats, which we call Sars CoV2, was finding its way from the cave to us. The cave in my work is neither a document nor a truth. It is rather a message, a signal, a connection.

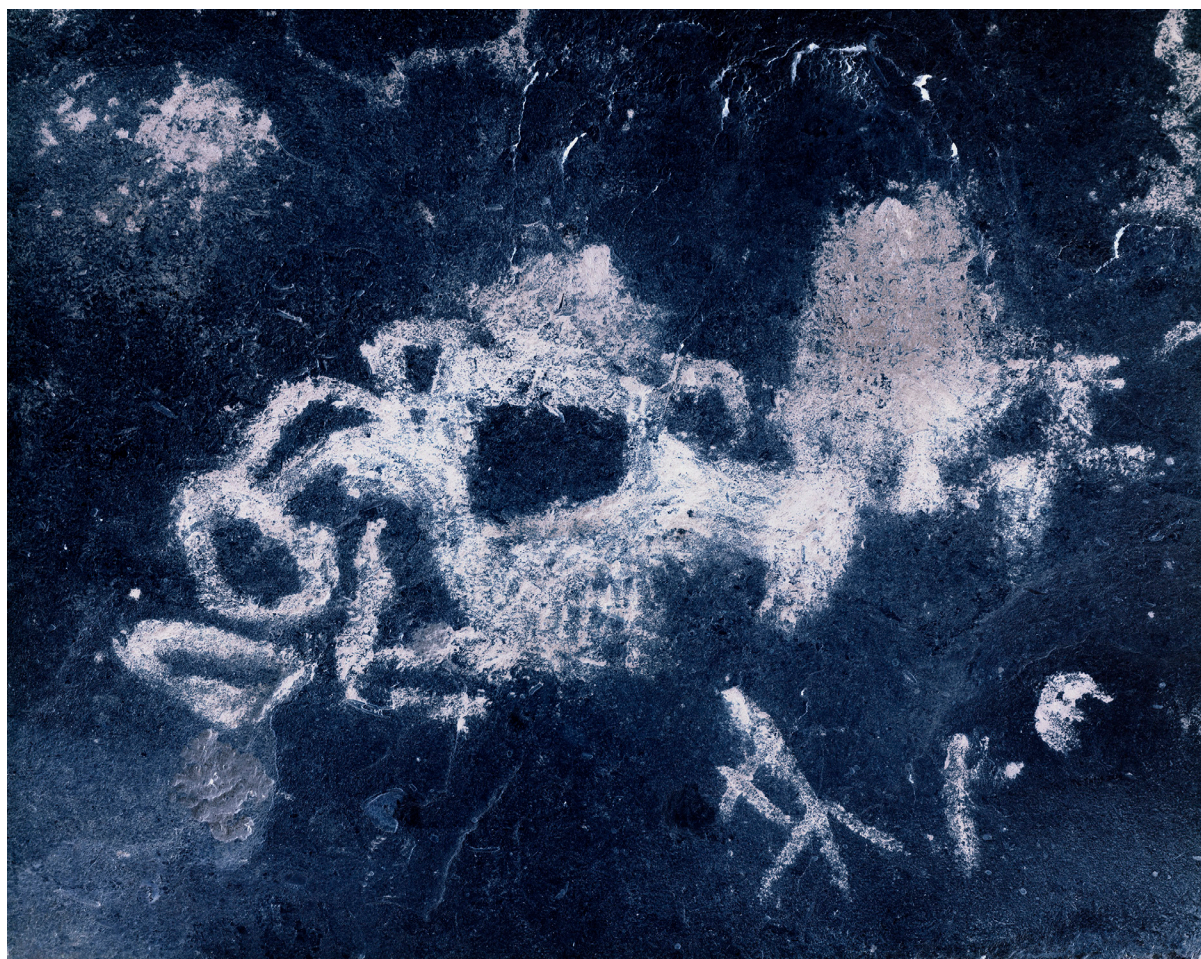
What our ancestors really painted in the depths of this unreachable, hidden, and lost sanctuary is not given to us. The only thing we can do is gaze into this depth. This unknown was once sacred. To look and to be looked at from mystery. The Deer Cave, in its almost entire complexity, was decorated with bat guano, now fossilized. This world, to which we are so unbreakably rooted while we try to destroy it, speaks back to us through all of these signs. Maybe the future has something to do with the past inside all of us.

The Fragility of Present Time.

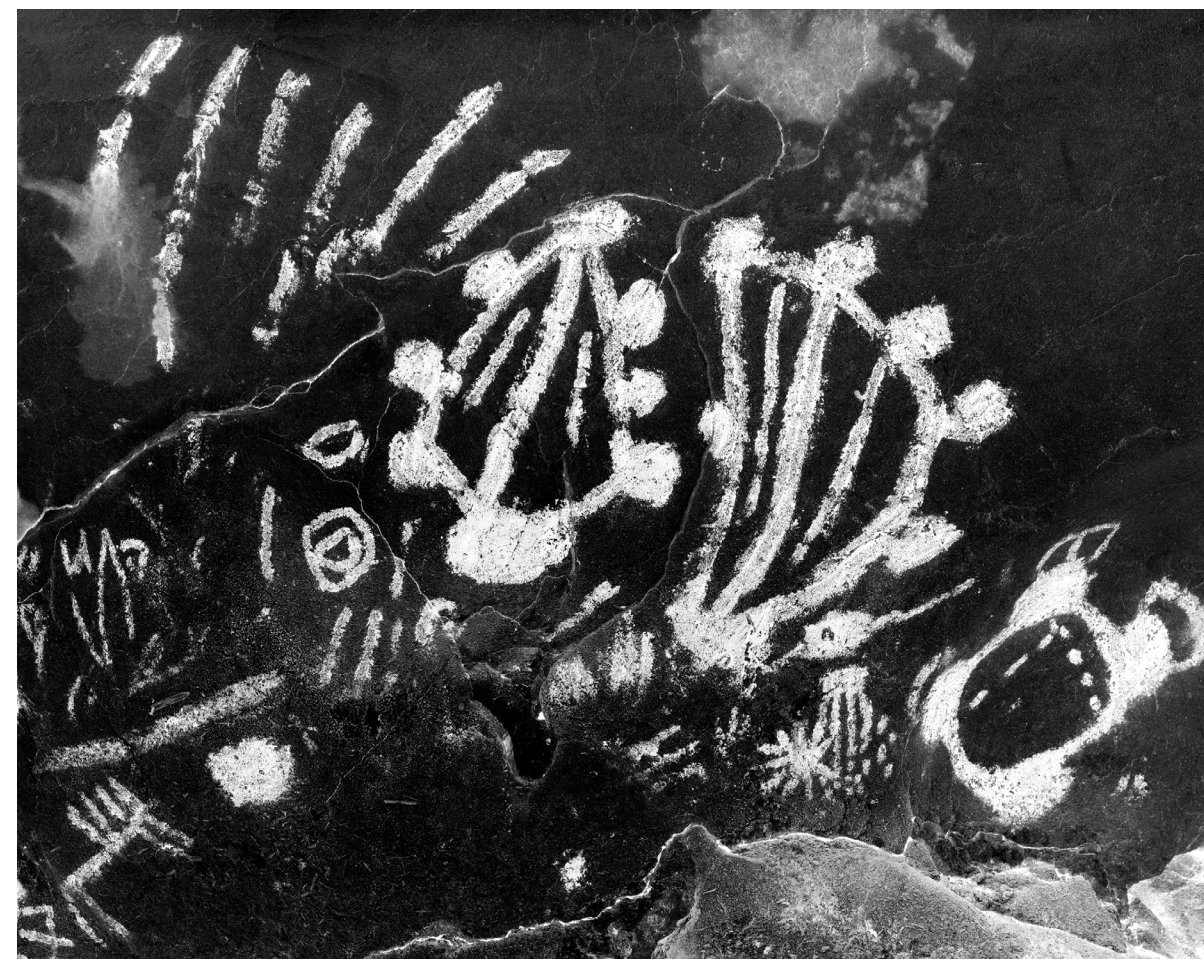
Domingo Milella



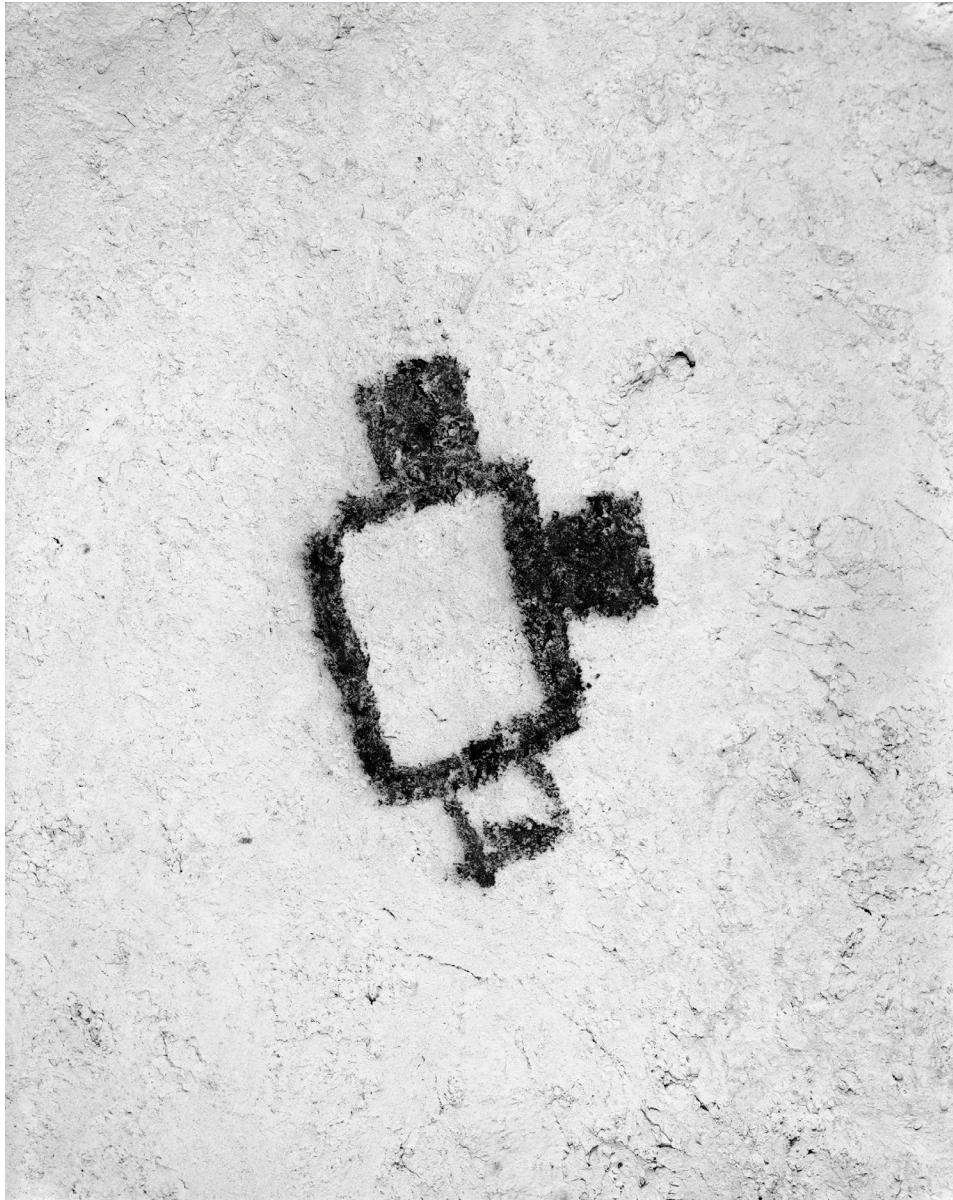
Deer Cave, The Portal, Italy 2019
205 x 257,6 cm



Deer Cave, Compartment M., Italy 2019,
68,7 x 85,2 cm



Deer Cave, Harp & Lights, Italy 2019,
96,1 x 119,6 cm



Deer Cave, To the Sky, Italy 2019
70,2 x 56,8 cm



Deer Cave, The Labyrinth, Italy 2019
62,4 x 77,2 cm



Deer Cave, The Dolphin, Italy 2019
185,5 x 222,1 cm



Deer Cave, We Are Here, Italy 2019
111,2 x 138,6 cm