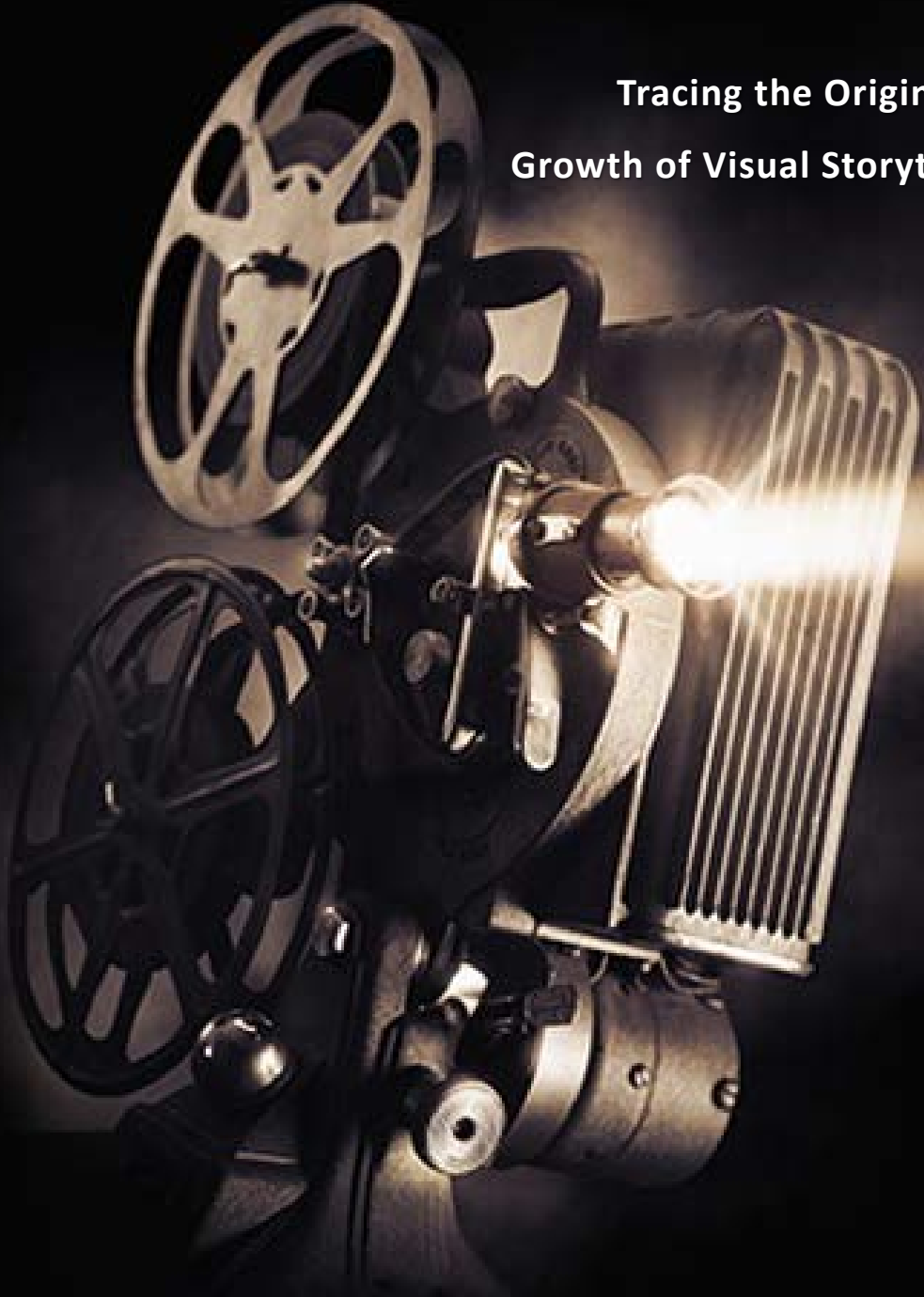


EVOLUTION OF CINEMATIC NARRATIVE:

Tracing the Origins and
Growth of Visual Storytelling



Assist. Prof. Dr. Baybars SAĞLAMTİMUR

yaz
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PREFACE

Art has always been a captivating lens via which we can discover the intricacies of human civilization. From the mysterious cave paintings of our ancestors to the captivating paintings, photographs and cinema of today, the human force to create and talk through art is an undying aspect of our existence. In this book, I want to go on an academic journey with you as we try to understand how the ancient drawings in caves are connected to contemporary visual storytelling.

Through careful examination the book purpose to unravel the mysteries surrounding the origins and purposes of cave artwork. While theories abound about why our ancestors created these historic masterpieces -whether as a part of rituals, for cultural transmission, or as expressions of identity- their importance as windows into our shared human past can not be overstated. By putting those archaeological wonders inside their cultural contexts, I am hoping to benefit deeper insights into the minds and lives of our historic predecessors.

This interdisciplinary exploration recognizes the interplay among diverse creative bureaucracy during human history. From the shared testimonies of fantasy and ritual to the technological improvements that have fashioned our visual way of life, the intersections among cinema, painting, and photographs screen the problematic net of human expression and cultural trade. By contextualizing those art bureaucracy inside broader social and cultural frameworks, I am hoping to deepen our information of the enduring significance in shaping human enjoy.

In contributing to the scholarly talk surrounding historical cave art and contemporary visible media, this book targets to offer a considerate examination of the iconic legacy of human creativity. By bridging the gap among past and present, I am hoping to resolve the profound mysteries of inventive expression and cultural continuity that bind us together as a species.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my wife Neslihan and our twin daughters Sudem and Selen for their unwavering support and inspiration throughout the writing process of this book.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Baybars Sağlamtimur, born in 1973 in Adana/Türkiye, is an academician and artist. He completed his Proficiency in Art studies on the Department of Plastic Arts at Kocaeli University, specializing in underwater photography and underwater plastic arts.

In 2007, he was awarded the title of "Artist of FIAP (AFIAP)" by the International Federation of Photographic Art. From 1996 to 2019, he worked as a lecturer at Mersin University, and from 2019 to 2021, he worked as a faculty member in the Photography Department of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Kocaeli University. Since 2021, he has been serving as a faculty member in the Department of Radio, Television, and Cinema at the Faculty of Communication at Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University.

He completed several photo projects and opened solo photo exhibitions. During his bachelor studies (Between 1992-94) at Hacettepe University in Ankara (Türkiye) he opened "Cave Photography (Mağara Fotoğrafları)" solo exhibitions. His 2011 solo photo exhibition "Halfeti from Underwater (Sualtıdan Halfeti)" was the first photography exhibition ever held in the Basilica Cistern in Istanbul (Türkiye). In 2016 he opened his "Desolate (İssız)" photo exhibition at the Konya Selçuk University Faculty of Fine Arts Art Gallery (Türkiye) which included his long exposure landscape photographs. In 2018, he opened his photo exhibition "Dreams Written in Water (Suya Yazılı Düşler)" at Mersin University (Türkiye), featuring his underwater modeling photo-works. In 2023, he photographed the Taurus frog (*Rana holtzi*) from under and above the water and opened world's first thematic photo exhibition "Toro: The Endemic Value of Niğde, Taurus Frog (Toro: Niğde'nin Endemik Değeri Toros Kurbağası)" which was dedicated only to this endemic amphibian species in

Niğde (Türkiye). In addition to numerous solo and group exhibitions, Sağlamtimur has received prestigious awards and has participated in exhibitions at national and international events. His photographs have been published in various albums, books, and magazines. He has also served as an organizer and/or jury member in many national and international photography organizations.

His life story has been included in the "Painting with Light" book series edited by Tekin Ertuğ, and his exemplary works, photographic views, and biography have been included in the updated edition of Prof. Güler Ertan's book "From 1960 to Present in Our Photography".

Sağlamtimur focused his academic studies on underwater photography and fine arts. Also his intense interest in caving sports and cave research during his bachelor years led to a lifelong research process based on caves, laying the groundwork for the creation of this book.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In almost all human cultures art is considered to be one of the defining characteristics of the human species (Morriss-Kay, 2010). In contemporary societies, the visual arts are closely linked with music, dance, and ritual practices that mark important life events, like religious ceremonies, and political events. Language, including poetry, song, and storytelling, is also intertwined with these art forms. Vocalization, ritualized movement, and visual display are not only part of animal courtship and dominance competition but also human expression. Music, dance, and body decoration likely have roots in the evolutionary history of the animal kingdom and were later used in new ways with complex symbolic meanings attached to them due to the evolution of human cognition (Morriss-Kay, 2010).

The reasons why our predecessors created cave art have long captivated archaeologists, anthropologists, and historians. There are several theories as to why prehistoric people decided to express themselves artistically, even if the exact causes of the genesis of cave paintings are unclear.

One widely accepted theory suggests that cave paintings served important cultural and spiritual purposes for early human communities. It is possible that the paintings were influenced by the religious and ceremonial customs of the ancient peoples because they frequently featured hunting scenes, animals, ceremonies, and mythological creatures. Cave paintings are thought to have been employed in rituals to ensure successful hunts,

connect with supernatural entities, or memorialise important events in the lives of early human civilizations.

Cave paintings may have contributed to communication and social cohesiveness among early human communities. They allowed early humans to share information about hunting strategies, territorial boundaries, and cultural customs through visual representations. Individuals in these societies may have benefited from cave art by fostering social bonds, shared identity, and collaboration, thereby improving their ability to survive and prosper in harsh environments.

Some historians argue that cave paintings served instructional objectives, notably in teaching younger generations about key survival skills, such as hunting methods, animal behaviour, and environmental knowledge. Early humans may have used cave paintings to teach their progeny about navigating and also understanding the world around them. The use of animal and natural event representations in the paintings may have been crucial in conveying these lessons.

Furthermore, it's possible that the identities, feelings, and creative impulses of both individuals and groups were expressed in these paintings. Just like any other kind of art, cave paintings can be considered as subjective and open to many interpretations. This is something to bear in mind. It's possible that our predecessors painted to express their creativity and basic human urge for self-expression, to make their mark on the world, or just to demonstrate how much they loved and appreciated nature.

Cave art provides evidence of early humans' cognitive development and symbolic thinking abilities. Our predecessors showed that they were capable of abstract thought, complex concept expression, and symbolic thinking by symbolising their surroundings. This cognitive skill sets *Homo sapiens* apart from other animals.

The significance of visuals as records is underscored by Maurantonio (2015), who suggests that they not only serve as documentation but also offer valuable insights into the rituals that define various communities and industries. This assertion aligns with Armstrong's (2019) perspective, which emphasizes that people historically recorded important information in written form to ensure its preservation and signify its importance. Thus, both scholars highlight the enduring value of visual and written records in capturing and conveying the essence of societal norms, practices, and beliefs across time.

Our ancestors probably created cave art for a variety of reasons, including spirituality, social interaction, education, identity expression and cognitive development. While we may never fully understand the motivations of our ancient relatives, the legacy of their artistic achievements continues to inspire wonder and curiosity, providing important insights into the rich fabric of human history and culture.

It is important to acknowledge the significant millennia-long evolution of human expression in order to make the connection between prehistoric cave paintings and contemporary film. Although our ancestors left mysterious marks on cave walls, the desire to tell stories

through images has endured through time. The development of cinema in the late 19th century from these prehistoric artistic endeavours is evidence of the human preoccupation with narrative and visual representation throughout history. Building on the foundations laid thousands of years ago, this cinematic evolution provides a fascinating exploration of how our basic need to communicate and create has changed over time.

When motion picture technology was developed in the late 19th century, cinema which we know it today was born. However, if we consider the broader concept of visual storytelling and the human impulse to represent movement and narrative through images, we can trace key developments that have shaped the foundation of cinema, even as far back as 40.000 years ago.

The Origin of the Cinema and cave art is explored in a range of studies. Wachtel (1993) suggests that the tools and techniques used by our ancestors in cave art created images that were essentially cinematic, with the potential to move, change color, and dissolve. Koepnick (2012) further expands on this idea, discussing Werner Herzog's film "Cave of Forgotten Dreams" to bring cinema's suppressed potentiality to life. Layng (2019) takes this a step further, proposing a future path for shared cinematic experiences through a virtual reality narrative experience. Azéma and Rivere (2012) delves into the representation of animal movement in cave art, suggesting that these flickering images may be the origins of cinema. These studies collectively highlight the potential for a

deeper understanding of the cinematic nature of cave art and its implications for the future of cinema.

Knowles and Marion (2021) posit that cinema -as a fundamentally hybrid medium- has consistently been shaped by its interactions with various other art forms, including painting, sculpture, photography, performance, and dance. By acknowledging the in-between nature of cinema, this book chapter embarks on charting fresh paths for comprehending the origins and evolution of cinema and visual storytelling. This perspective suggests that cinema cannot be isolated from its interdisciplinary influences; rather, it thrives at the intersection of diverse artistic practices, contributing to its rich and multifaceted nature.

2. CAVE PAINTING

The oldest examples of visual communication were the murals found in prehistoric caves, which allowed people to convey their feelings, ideas, and dreams (Soydan and Korkmaz, 2013). These paintings were not merely decorative but were utilized to convey various messages, including warnings of impending danger or attempts to mesmerize prey animals (Turani, 1997). In many ways, the caves can be viewed as among the earliest mediums for altered reality, language, and writing. The act of marking the cave walls with materials such as burnt sticks marked the inception of this visual communication technique, which evolved through experimentation and adaptation for various purposes, ranging from aesthetic pleasure to religious and magical significance.

While cave images may not represent the absolute first form of visual communication utilized by humans throughout history, they are undoubtedly foundational and among the oldest surviving examples. Comprehending these visuals is essential to understanding the growth of the visual mind and arts like typography, graphic design, and sketching. According to Meggs and Purvis (2006), the development of typography was as important as the discovery of writing because it made it easier to record, retrieve, and store knowledge across time and distance. This historical link between typography and cave drawings suggests that the symbolic forms depicted in caves may have evolved into the alphabet and eventually printed words. Therefore, typography can be seen not only as a historical extension of cave images but also as an invention of considerable importance akin to cave drawings (Mullen, 2008). This perspective underscores the enduring influence and interconnectedness of early visual communication methods with contemporary practices, highlighting the profound impact of ancient artistic expressions on the development of human civilization.

The French archaeologist Henri Breuil proposed that cave paintings belong to the Ice Age. The most important characteristic of Ice Age paintings is that they consist only of lines. This period is called the Aurignacien. These lines are very important because they reveal the artistic orientation of the ancient people. The Age of Solutréen was the age of transition to an age of freedom in which colour spots were used in addition to the line. Style became plasticised and expression became vivid. Forms

were given the characteristic of movement. Important works of the Solutréen Age are in Valencia and Dordogne. In the Magdalénien Age, art emerges as a paint feature. Altamira, Lascaux and Niaux are the places where the most important works of the Magdalene Age are found. Again, in this age, the problems of moment, gaze, back and front directions, movement, shadow-light and mass were discussed. At the end of this age, art returns to expression with line. The plastic expression of shaping is abandoned (Turani, 1997).

Cave paintings do not distinguish between place and time. They seem to be entwined inexorably. It was difficult for the Palaeolithic worldview to accept ideas like cause and effect or the past, present, and future. Their view of the world might have been more mythological, emphasizing the unification of causes and effects as well as the compression of the past, present, and future into an endless now (Wachtel, 1993).

The ability to create artwork on bark, wood, animal pelts, or stone was possessed by cave painters. They had the option to paint in natural light, which has many obvious benefits, and take their paintings into the caves, but they decided against it. It is simple to assume that the painters' reason for working in the caves was related to the features of the light source and the caverns' visual surroundings. They had to have been effective for a particular effect, which one could have thought would still be visible to the eyes of today. The walls are capable of bending softly or violently in any direction. Between the towering vaults are low, hardly passable corridors. Seldom are the gaps

predictable or regular. Under a flickering, moving illumination, of an ancient lamp, even the naked, uneven surfaces seem to come and go, to shift and move (Figure 1) (Wachtel, 1993).

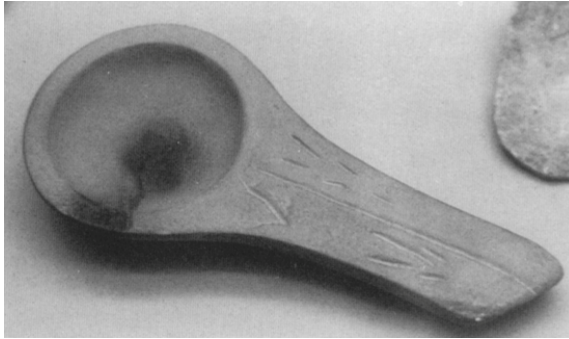


Figure 1. The prehistoric equivalent of a lightbulb. Animal fat was poured into the concave end. A wick made of fur or moss was utilized (Wachtel, 1993).

The history and significance of cave paintings have long piqued interest and generated discussion. According to Boorstin (1992), the late Pleistocene era's profusion of game and creative energy might have served as the inspiration for these works of art. Armas Wilson (2019) and Menu (1996) both examine the symbolic and technical aspects of cave paintings; the latter addresses the paintings' possible functions, such as religious, ceremonial, or communicational importance, while the former concentrates on the technical system of ornamentation. In his exploration of the spiritual and emotional dimensions of cave art, Whitley (2009) suggests that cave art may have served as a record of religious beliefs as well as a vehicle for artistic expression.

3. CAVE THEATRE

Ancient cave theatre refers to a form of performing arts that dates back to antiquity, where theatrical events were held within natural cave formations. Many ancient nations and civilisations, including the Greeks, Romans and early Asian communities, are the originators of this practice. The use of caves as theatrical venues provided a unique and atmospheric setting for storytelling, rituals, and cultural performances (Niewöhner et al., 2016).

In ancient times caves were not only chosen for their natural acoustics but also held cultural and religious significance. The mystical ambiance of these subterranean spaces added a spiritual and otherworldly dimension to the theatrical experience. Performances in ancient cave theatres often incorporated elements of mythology, folklore, and religious ceremonies, connecting the art of storytelling with the sacred nature of the cave environment (Kolankaya-Bostancı, 2014). These ancient cave theatres were not only places of entertainment but also served as communal gathering spaces for communities to come together. The shared experience of watching performances in a cave fostered a sense of unity and cultural identity. Furthermore, stalactites and stalagmites, two of the cave's natural characteristics, were occasionally included into the set design, which improved the performances' visual appeal (Kirby, 2020).

The legacy of ancient cave theatre can still be seen in archaeological sites around the world, where remnants of seating arrangements, stages, and other theatrical infrastructure have been discovered. Modern attempts to

revive this tradition often involve the exploration of historical practices and the adaptation of ancient storytelling techniques to contemporary audiences. The allure of ancient cave theatre lies in its ability to transport spectators to a time when performance and nature intertwined, creating a truly immersive and transcendent artistic experience.

The oldest references to shadow play were explained in "The Allegory of the Cave." Written around 366 BC, the allegory describes people, a fire, conjurors (magicians who perform), a curtain in front of the magicians, an audience, and shadows that speak and move. All of the key components of shadow theater are covered in one location. In their performance, shadow puppets depicted the positive and negative connections between black and white, good and evil, joy and sadness, and the overall quality of existence. A sense of social belonging can be fostered by the performance by strengthening the community. As a result, audiences everywhere may understand its historical, cultural, and entertaining worth (Ramli and Lugiman, 2012).

In Plato's "Allegory of the Cave," prisoners are cuffed inside a cave and face a wall that is covered in shadows cast by items that are burning behind them. The prisoners mistake these shadows for reality, unaware that they are merely representations of true forms (Figure 2). In the cinema -similarly- audiences sit in a darkened room, watching images projected onto a screen. Baudry (1986) suggests that like the prisoners in the cave, cinema spectators accept these projected images as reality, despite

being aware that they are representations created through a technological apparatus. Baudry's analogy raises questions about the nature of perception and the role of the spectator in shaping their own reality. Just as the prisoners in Plato's cave are constrained by their limited perspective, cinema spectators are influenced by the framing and editing choices made by filmmakers. The cinematic experience becomes a form of controlled perception, with audiences willingly suspending disbelief to immerse themselves in the narrative world presented onscreen (Allen, 1993; Königsberg, 1996; Gürbüzdal, 2021; Pothast, 2021).



Figure 2. Fitton, D. (2017), Plato's view presented in The Allegory of the Cave (Fitton, 2017).

Ice Age humans may have created cave paintings as a result of spontaneous visions in pitch-black environments, perhaps inspired by the echoing sounds of lights and torches, as well as naturally occurring rock formations. This interpretation is subjective and may have been augmented by the use of shamanic drugs. Prehistoric

cave art features cryptic geometric patterns, realistic animals, and human-animal hybrids, reflecting hallucinogenic experiences akin to modern sensory deprivation studies or migraines. These images suggest two forms of prehistoric theatre: visionary experiences projected onto rock surfaces and collaborative performances using the art as a backdrop. Cave art sites vary in accessibility, with some easily reachable and others requiring arduous journeys underground, possibly associated with transformative rituals led by shamanic leaders (Pizzato, 2013).

In "Palaeoperformance," Yann-Pierre Montelle analyzes evidence of theatricality in French prehistoric caves, including cave size, paintings, artifacts, and acoustic properties. Jean Clottes and David Lewis-Williams theorize that cave art documented and ritually used hallucinatory trance experiences. Ice Age cave art might have resulted from visions in darkness, influenced by sounds and natural features, possibly aided by shamanic drugs. The art, including geometric patterns and realistic figures, mirrors modern hallucinogenic experiences, suggesting prehistoric theatre manifested in visionary experiences and collaborative performances within caves (Pizzato, 2013).

The imagery evokes a scene where human and animal puppets are manipulated within a cave, their shadows cast by a fire serving as the audience's sole perception of reality. However, it's important to note that while reminiscent of ancient Greek shadow plays, this narrative is better understood as an allegory illustrating the deceptive nature of sensory perception, rather than a literal

representation of such theatrical performances (Chen, 2003).

The Turkish shadow theatre tradition, famously known as "Karagöz," bears resemblance to Plato's allegory of the cave, particularly under the influence of Sufi thought, which views the real world as a reflection or mimicry of the world of ideas. The prologue and representational style of the play, along with its former and modern names "Imagination" and "Shadow Play," as well as the main character's name "Karagöz" (meaning "Blackeyed"), all encourage an active mode of viewing. Karagöz shows historically served as a social activity where individuals from various social classes participated on equal terms, highlighting its significance as one of Turkey's distinctive cultural and cinematic traditions (Figure 3) (Balan, 2008).



Figure 3. Turkish shadow theatre: Karagöz

4. FROM CAVE TO CINEMA

The connection between ancient cave paintings, dating back around 40,000 years, and modern movies might not seem immediately apparent, but there are several intriguing parallels and connections that can be drawn. While cave paintings and movies are vastly different in terms of medium, technology, and purpose, they both serve as forms of visual storytelling, encapsulating narratives, emotions, and cultural expressions of their respective times.

Both cave paintings and movies are forms of visual narrative. In ancient times, cave paintings were a means for early humans to communicate their experiences, beliefs, and stories visually. These paintings often depicted scenes of hunting, rituals, or mythological events, serving as a record of the cultural and social life of ancient peoples. Similar to this, films use images -albeit moving images projected onto a screen- to tell tales, evoke feelings, and convey ideas. Similar to cave paintings, films have the ability to take viewers to new places and eras while engrossing them in tales that speak to their humanity.

While the technology used to create cave paintings was rudimentary compared to modern filmmaking techniques, both mediums represent significant advancements in human innovation and creativity within their respective historical contexts. Basic tools like sticks and brushes, as well as natural colours made from minerals, plants, and animal entrails, were used to produce the artworks found in caves. However, to make characters come to life on screen, filmmakers employ cutting edge

cameras, audio equipment, editing software, and special effects. Still, the basic human drive to tell and share stories endures, transcending both time and technical progress, even in the face of such stark contrasts in technology.

The word "proto-cinema" refers to pre-cinema or early cinema technologies. Werner Herzog directed the documentary *The Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (Spaulding, 2023), which was released in 2010. In the film, the Chauvet Cave in southern France is explored. The film guides us through the mysterious depths of the Chauvet Cave in southern France, where we encounter breathtaking cave paintings dating back over 30,000 years, revealing humanity's ancient artistic heritage. One of the earliest examples of proto-cinema is found in cave drawings (Armstrong, 2019). In the 2010 documentary *Forgotten Dreams*, the idea of the cave as a proto-cinema is first presented. Herzog observes that the lights the crew has put on the cave's walls mimic the torches that Palaeolithic painters used, despite the cave's lack of natural light. The crew's only lighting supplies are four cold light panels and battery belts in order to protect the paintings. The earliest humans painted in total darkness, illuminating their environment with oil lamps made of natural or animal fat. There is a striking parallel between the basic ideas of cinema and the sharp contrast between the illuminated images on the wall and the cave's pitch-black interior. It's similar to walking into a poorly lit movie theatre and observing the darkness that falls before the show starts when you enter the cave. Like the area in the cave devoted to the artworks, the movie's experience is contained within a specific perimeter (Moore, 2019; Spaulding, 2023).

The following components make up the proto-cinema in the cave, according to the previously described observations: 1) Light and dark; 2) Clearly defined enclosure; 3) Environments; 4) Paintings and the sense of motion and movement; 5) Actored scenes; 6) Narration; 7) Light and shadow interaction; 8) Colors; 9) Sound and music; 10) Creation of myths and paranormal and shamanic visions; and 11) Involvement of the community (Moore, 2019).

Cave paintings also depict the CinemaScope era of film history. CinemaScope is more than just a trademarked lens used in giant movie theatres; it also refers to any viewing on an epic scale, such as a large spectacle or widescreen viewing of something other than films. Cave art, like going to the cinema, is a spectatorial experience in which the dark cave serves as a dark cinema. The fire in the cave served as a light source, similar to a projector light, which gave movement to the images on the cave wall, making them appear more lifelike and alive, as if the cave paintings of wild animals were fleeing. There is even evidence that some cave paintings depict horses with multiple sets of legs, or the same image of a horse appearing in succession, as if they were painted with the intention of using the flickering firelight as a tool to make the animals appear to be moving (Armstrong, 2019).

The history of filmmaking spans millennia, with roots in the shamanic practices of ancient cultures. Shamanism, an ancient spiritual tradition that has been practiced for millennia, revolves around shamans connecting with the spirit realm and serving as bridges

between the physical and metaphysical dimensions. Shamans use rituals such as chanting, drumming, dance, and psychoactive substances to enter altered states of consciousness. This allows them to gain insights, heal the sick, and guide their communities (Moore, 2019).

Prehistoric cave paintings found in sacred caves are early examples of visual storytelling. They reflect the shamanic worldview and spiritual beliefs of our ancestors. These ancient artworks often depict animals, hunting scenes, and symbolic motifs. They were created as part of shamanic rituals to communicate with the spirit world, ensure successful hunts, and transmit cultural knowledge across generations (Moore, 2019; Kaplan, 2023)

The emergence of cinema in the late 19th century marked the dawn of a fresh era in storytelling, where filmmakers took on the mantle of contemporary shamans, weaving narratives that transport audiences across realms of imagination and emotion. Through manipulating light, sound and narrative structure, filmmakers transport audiences into alternate realities, evoke powerful emotions and provoke profound insights. Like shamans, filmmakers wield the transformative power of storytelling to heal, inspire and challenge perceptions.

In the cinematic experience, viewers embark on a journey that can be compared to the shamanic quest for enlightenment. The darkened theatre becomes a sacred space, and the flickering images on the screen serve as portals to other worlds and dimensions of consciousness. As audiences surrender to the collective trance induced by

the film, they undergo a process of catharsis, reflection, and spiritual awakening (Kaplan, 2023).

At its core, both shamanic rituals and filmmaking express the human desire for transcendence and connection. People yearn to transcend the confines of everyday life and tap into something beyond themselves, whether it's through communing with ancestral spirits deep within a cave or losing themselves in the immersive narrative of a film. This connection provides meaning, purpose, and a sense of belonging in the vast tapestry of existence (Kaplan, 2023).

Rountree (2008) and Halifax (1979) both highlight the role of shamanic rituals and filmmaking in providing a sense of connection and transcendence. Rountree (2008) suggests that auteur film directors serve as contemporary shamans, using the medium of film to create a communal experience that mirrors the shamanic role of connecting individuals with something greater. Halifax (1979) emphasizes the visionary narratives of shamans, which similarly seek to transcend the mundane and connect with the cosmos. Lindquist (1999) delves deeper into the transformative influence of shamanic rituals, framing them as a type of storytelling that fosters a collective cultural journey. Olga (2010) underscores the integrating role of shamanism in traditional culture, suggesting that both shamanic rituals and filmmaking can provide a sense of belonging and meaning in the human experience.

It is discovered that in Chauvet Cave there is a little opening through which water enters the cave after rain. The way the animal representations were grouped around it by

Palaeolithic artists suggests that this area was formerly a gathering place for animals to drink. It's obvious that they were using the features of the cave as settings for painting acts as well as narrative backdrops. We can see an inventive approach to the setting and the creation of narratives through associations in addition to the chronological progression of events in this work. Images of animals interacting with one another in the cave depict a range of emotions, including jealousy, hostility, tension, rage, and courtship. These instinctive feelings are portrayed in paintings of two rhinoceroses fighting, maybe for territory or females, whining horses, a male lion courting a female who rejects him, bison running from a predator, and other scenarios. In the cave's farthest chamber, known as the Chamber of Lions, is a stunning painting depicting an extinct species of cave lions (Figure 4). The composition stands out because it concentrates more on the moments of intense anticipation preceding the chase and killing than it does on the actual hunting or killing. Similar to stressful moments in movies, the picture of the lions captures the moments before a lethal attack is launched (Moore, 2019).

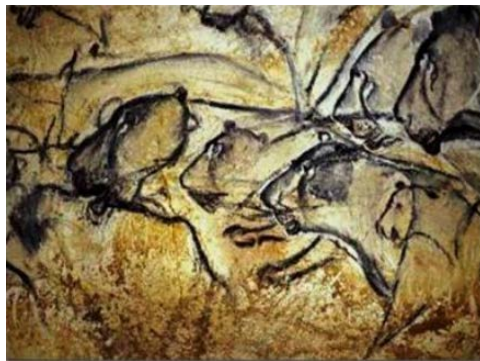


Figure 4. Chamber of Lions, Cave of Forgotten Dreams
(Moore, 2019).

To give the impression that the creatures in their cave paintings were moving, Palaeolithic artists gave them additional legs. They drew a bison with eight legs, for instance (Figure 5). The outcome of this technique bears resemblance to the approach employed by Eadweard Muybridge in his iconic series of photographs, "The Horse in Motion" (1878), which ingeniously brought a galloping horse to vivid life (Prodger and Gunning, 2003). In addition, Étienne-Jules Marey produced a chronophotographic work called *Horse in Motion* (1886) that has similarities to the eight-legged bison's cave paintings (Figure 5). When one compares the way early photographers attempted to capture movement with the way Palaeolithic artists portrayed animals in motion, one finds that the two approaches to depicting subjects in motion are similar (Moore, 2019).



Figure 5. (Left) Bison with eight legs, Cave of Forgotten Dreams. (Right) Horse in motion, Etienne-Jules Marey (Moore, 2019)

Marcel Duchamp is especially famous for his paintings showing movement such as *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2* (Figure 6). The movement is not a perspective according to different eyes in the painting, as in

Pablo Picasso, but a step-by-step sequence such as a figure descending a staircase. This is also called the technique of volume slicing in painting (Pavlopoulos, 2011). The movement is simplified but at the same time visually complex as it consists of a superposition of successive pictures. It has also inspired cinematography (Çeziktürk, 2023).



Figure 6. Marcel Duchamp, "Nude Descending a Staircase, No.2", Oil on canvas, 147 cm × 89.2 cm

Herzog characterizes the paintings in "Cave of Forgotten Dreams" as dreamlike rather than strictly factual representations (Figure 7). This interpretation aligns with Lewis-Williams' theory that the cave serves as an Upper Palaeolithic visionary shamanic underworld, where the art depicts visions of internal landscapes (Lewis-Williams, 2004a). This notion is further supported by observations

from Chauvet Cave and other Upper Palaeolithic sites, where mental imagery is projected onto concrete surfaces, creating visions that transcend the viewer's real-time, place, and reality (Lewis-Williams, 2004b). Scholars such as Moore (2015), Kaplan (2023), and Spaulding (2023) suggest that this phenomenon, akin to a "time out of time" or "ritual consciousness," is characteristic of both the cinema apparatus and certain ritualistic experiences.



Figure 7. A scene from a documentary movie (*Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, 2011) by Werner Herzog. Ancient shamanic cave painting depicting a moving horse strangely resonates across time thousands of years before the first moving image whose subject was also a moving horse (Kaplan, 2023).

The Magdalenian artists were essentially the forerunners of visual storytelling, producing cinematic visuals that were not constrained by time or technology. Their inventive application of materials, methods, and surrounding circumstances established the foundation for the creation of cinema and television, demonstrating the everlasting capacity of human imagination and innovation throughout history. May we come to understand the rich fabric of human history and the enduring search for expression and meaning as we investigate and interpret

these old artworks (Wachtel, 1993; Bello et al., 2020; Garate et al., 2023; Wordpress, 2024).

Magdalenian ancestors created cinematic images through their cave paintings and etchings offers a fascinating perspective on the ancient origins of visual storytelling. While traditional interpretations have often portrayed these artworks as static representations akin to photographs, a closer examination reveals that the tools, techniques, and environmental factors at play in their creation facilitated a dynamic viewing experience reminiscent of cinema. The Magdalenian artists utilized brushes, blowguns, and various natural pigments to bring their visions to life on the irregular surfaces of the cave walls. These tools allowed for a level of detail and nuance that imbued the artworks with a sense of movement and vitality. Additionally, the use of lamps fuelled by animal fat created shifting patterns of light and shadow, enhancing the illusion of movement and transformation within the cave environment (Wachtel, 1993; Bello et al., 2020; Garate et al., 2023; Wordpress, 2024).

From the sacred caves where our ancestors communed with spirits to the digital screens of today's world, the shamanic roots of filmmaking persist, influencing how we perceive stories and interact with our surroundings. By recognizing this long-standing heritage, we also acknowledge the important role that filmmakers play as contemporary shamans, leading us on a path of individual and societal growth. Let us keep in mind the sacred sources from which film originated and the timeless

lessons it will continue to impart as we explore the ever-evolving world of film (Wachtel, 1993).

The distinctive outlines and textures of the cave walls themselves were also a major contributor to the paintings' cinematic feel. As viewers moved through the caves, their perspective would shift, causing the images to appear to move and change before their eyes. This dynamic interaction between viewer and artwork transformed the static images into immersive and engaging experiences, akin to the sensation of watching a film unfold onscreen (Wachtel, 1993).

The cinematic essence of these ancient artworks is emphasized by their capacity to evoke a multitude of emotions and reactions from those who behold them. Just as a well-crafted film can elicit laughter, tears, or suspense, the cave paintings and etchings of our ancestors were designed to captivate and engage the senses, inviting viewers into a world of imagination and wonder (Wachtel, 1993).

Cave paintings and movies both engage audiences in different ways. While cave paintings were likely experienced by small, local communities, movies have the potential to reach global audiences through cinemas, television, streaming platforms, and other digital media channels. However, like cave paintings, movies have the power to evoke emotional responses, provoke thought, and spark conversations among viewers. Whether it's the breathtaking beauty of ancient cave art or the captivating storytelling of a blockbuster film, both mediums have the

power to captivate and inspire audiences spanning generations.

Both cave paintings and movies reflect the cultural values, beliefs, and aspirations of the societies that created them. Cave paintings provide valuable glimpses into the lives and perspectives of our ancient forebears, offering clues about their spiritual convictions, societal dynamics, and connections with the natural world. Likewise, movies act as mirrors reflecting modern culture, exploring themes such as identity, morality, politics, and interpersonal connections. Whether it's through the symbolism of ancient cave art or the allegorical narratives of modern cinema, both mediums offer rich sources of cultural heritage and artistic expression.

Cave art has played an important role in the overall development of media. In many ways, caves were the first new medium for speech and writing. These ancient forms of visual communication stand as some of the oldest still in practice today. To comprehend them is to grasp the evolution of the visual mind, along with the artistry and techniques behind drawing, typography, photography, and film (Mullen, 2008). Cave art played an important role in this development, serving as a primary motivation for ideographs, pictographs and, more recently, modern written communication such as the alphabet. Cave art is a kind of proto-film that paved the way for other early forms of cinema, including shadow plays, the camera obscura and panoramic paintings (Armstrong, 2019).

5. EVOLUTION OF CINEMA: TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS IN THE LATE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

An ancient example of visual storytelling is the production of prehistoric cave paintings, such those seen in French caverns like Lascaux and Chauvet. These ancient artworks depicted animals, hunting scenes, and abstract symbols, potentially serving as narratives of daily life, rituals, and mythological beliefs. The use of imagery to convey stories and experiences laid the groundwork for future developments in visual storytelling, including cinema.

The development of cinema has been a complex and multifaceted process, with key milestones including the prehistoric cave art, Greek theatre (Figure 8) and Chinese shadow play (Figure 9) (Lyons, 1972). The development of the magic lantern and other optical instruments in the 17th and 18th centuries, which significantly enhanced the craft of visual storytelling, was made possible by these early forms of visual storytelling (Dominiczak, 2016). The 19th century saw the emergence of the concept of persistence of vision, a crucial element in the creation of moving images (Rossell, 1998). As digital technology became more prevalent in the film industry, it quickly transformed the way movies were created, leading to significant evolution throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. These advancements have revolutionised our understanding of and interactions with the world via the medium of film.

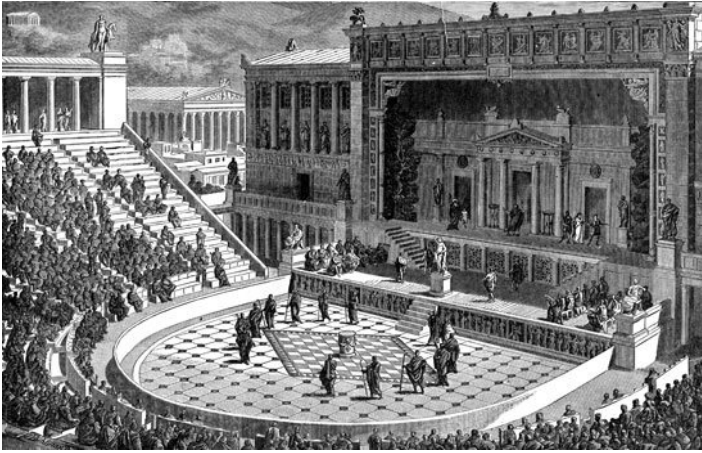


Figure 8. Greek Theatre (5th century BCE)

In ancient Greece (5th century BCE), theatre performances utilized masks and dramatic gestures to convey stories to audiences. Additionally, shadow play (10th century BCE), a form of puppetry using translucent screens and light sources, was practiced in various cultures, including China and Indonesia. These theatrical forms demonstrated early techniques for engaging audiences with visual narratives, hinting at the potential for more sophisticated storytelling techniques in the future.



Figure 9. Chinese shadow puppetry

The invention of the magic lantern in the 17th century allowed for the projection of images onto screens or walls using a light source and translucent slides (Figure 10). This precursor to the modern projector was used for entertainment, education, and religious purposes, demonstrating the early exploration of projected imagery as a form of visual communication.

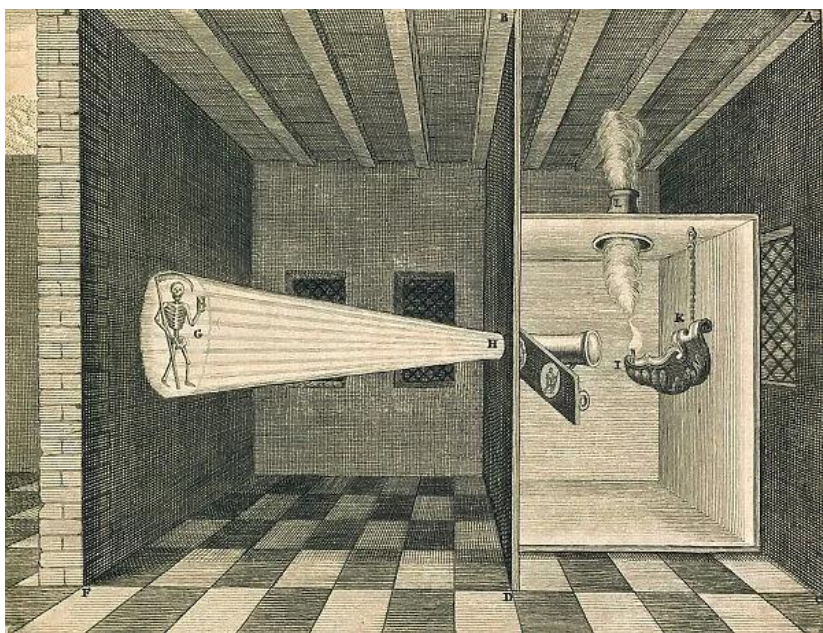


Figure 10. A Magic Lantern Display from 17th century

The persistence of vision phenomenon, wherein the human brain retains images briefly after they disappear from sight, along with the phi phenomenon, which creates the illusion of movement with rapidly succeeding images, enables still frames on a film strip to convey continuous motion when projected at the correct speed. Before the advent of photography, optical toys such as the Phenakistoscope (c. 1832), featuring a twirling disk

adorned with sequential drawings of moving objects (Figure 11), and the Zoetrope (c. 1834), a rotating drum containing similar phase drawings (Figure 12), utilized these effects. These early inventions hinted at the vast potential of visual storytelling through animation.

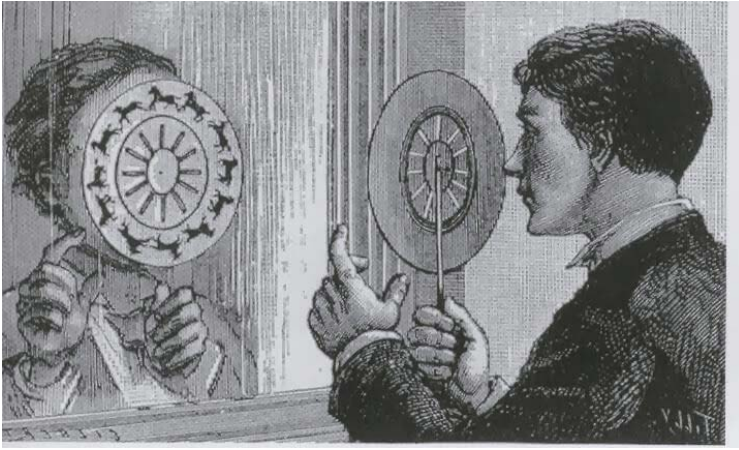


Figure 11. Phenakistoscope (1832's)



Figure 12. Zoetrope (1834's)

In 1826 French inventor Joseph Nicéphore Niépce invented photography and in 1839, French painter Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre perfected the technique with his own invention: Daguerreotype, a positive photographic process. In 1841, English scientist William Henry Fox Talbot introduced a negative photographic process, enabling the production of unlimited positive prints from each negative. This innovation revolutionized photography by making mass production of images feasible and accessible. Photography evolved, enabling the replacement of phase drawings with individually posed phase photographs. Live action needed spontaneous and simultaneous photography. In 1870, Eadweard Muybridge achieved exposure times as short as 1/1000 second. His series of photographs captured a running horse, marking a pivotal step toward true motion pictures (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Eadweard Muybridge: Photographic study of a man jumping a horse (1880s)

Thomas Edison unveiled the Kinetograph (1890), a primitive motion picture camera. He announced the Kinetoscope (1892), which projected moving images onto a screen (Figure 14). Public film screenings began in newly opened “Kinetograph Parlors” (1894) (Lipton, 2021; Wiseman, 2021; Cook and Sklar, 2024).

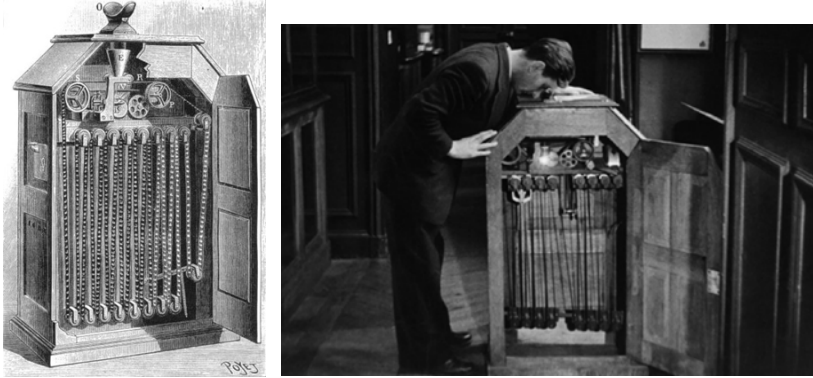


Figure 14. An invention by Thomas A. Edison: Kinetoscope (1893) and its use

These developments may not directly resemble the cinematic experiences of today, they represent significant milestones in the human quest to represent movement and narrative through visual imagery. Cinema began to take shape as a separate art form in the late 19th century with the help of these early innovations, technological breakthroughs, and improved narrative strategies.

The premieres of short films by the Lumière brothers in 1895, notably "Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory" and "Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat", are considered to be turning points in the history of cinema. During the silent era (1890s to 1920s), filmmakers experimented with visual narrative techniques. Notable

works include Georges Méliès' fantasy film "A Trip to the Moon" (1902) and D.W. Griffith's groundbreaking epic "The Birth of a Nation" (1915). The advent of synchronised sound in the late 1920s transformed cinema and ushered in the age of 'talkies'. The introduction of digital technology (1990's) revolutionised filmmaking, democratising the craft and creating new storytelling possibilities (Olszynko-Gryn and Ellis, 2017; Iqbal, 2024). Throughout its journey, cinema evolved into the vibrant industry we know today. Directors, technological innovations, and countless movies have shaped its rich history.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Dimly lighted cave walls are glistened with the flickering light of an oil lamp. The air is thick with anticipation, and the soft murmur of our ancestors' echoes through time. They gather around the fire and tell stories of hunting, gods and spirits, life, and death. However these stories are not only just spoken, but also inscribed into the very fabric of the cave. Welcome to the cradle of film, the primordial canvas on which our earliest visual storytellers left their everlasting mark. Long before the Lumière brothers projected moving images onto a screen, our ancestors were creating stories in the darkness of their sanctuaries.

Cave paintings, those cryptic marvels hidden in the labyrinthine bowels of our planet, give us our first glimpse of cinematic history. Armed with simple tools and boundless creativity, these prehistoric painters transformed cold rock into living, breathing stories. Their

pigments (ochre, charcoal, and manganese) were the pixels of their time, capturing the essence of life. The caves themselves, whether at Lascaux, Altamira or Chauvet, were more than just canvases. They were theatres with walls decorated with scenes of bison, horses and other animals. These classical authors recognised the value of visual storytelling. They understood that a flash of movement, a hint of life, could transcend the static and transport their viewers to other worlds.

Imagine standing in the primordial darkness, torch in hand, the flickering flames casting long shadows on the walls. The bison charge, their legs stretching unimaginably far. The hunters follow, spears ready for the slaughter. The interaction of light and shadow is what gave rise to the fundamental elements of cinema. Our predecessors had no need of projectors or celluloid. They used the natural contours of the cave -the undulating surfaces- to create depth and perspective. They painted with intent, using the texture of the rock to accentuate their storytelling. The flickering of the flames inspired the first frame-by-frame animation, each stroke of pigment a discovery.

Ancient filmmakers were hunters with hands that served a great purpose. Enter the shaman, the link between the earthly and the spiritual. Dressed in animal skins and wearing sacred emblems, these spiritual advisors stood at the crossroads of the earthly and the otherworldly. Like a director, the shaman oversaw the visual symphony of the cave. They led their tribe through the flickering tales with ritualistic precision. They summoned the spirits, danced with the shadows, and revealed the secrets of life. Their

craft was more than entertainment; it was a channel to the supernatural.

The torches flickered out over the millennia and the cave painters fell into obscurity. But their legacy lives on. Their art laid the foundations for our cinematic vocabulary, including the close-up, the tracking shot and the jump cut, all inscribed in those ancient ochre strokes. So the next time you walk into a darkened theatre, think of the blaze of a campfire and the dance of shadows on cave walls. Our cinematic odyssey began not with glittering screens, but with primordial stones. The cave artists, the first visual storytellers, whisper to us across time: "Look deeper. Look beyond the surface. Cinema is more than a show; it is the heartbeat of humanity". So we honour them - the nameless authors who have painted our visions into reality. Their canvas was stone and their brush a flash of flame. Perhaps they created the idea of the cinema unknowingly, and in doing so, they fired our collective imagination.

In this book, the author critically explores the idea that transformation occurs when ideas, forms and emotions cross artistic media, tracing a history from cave painting to fine art, and from photography to cinema. The development of cinematic narrative is marked by significant milestones, and the chapters in the book meticulously examine the origins and growth of visual storytelling. The transition from static drawings to moving images gave cinema its current dynamic character.

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EVOLUTION OF CINEMATIC NARRATIVE:

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Storytelling**

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