January Program

The Cave Spoke Back: Archaeoacoustics and Rock Art

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 21, 6:55 – 8:00 pm MST
Location: Click on http://zoom.us/j/6136944443 any time after 6:45 pm. Program will start at 7 pm.

Presenter: Steven J. Waller, Ph.D.

Description: Research results demonstrating the importance of sound relative to rock art will be presented. Rock art is typically found in echoing environments, and ancient myths preserve cultural perceptions that echoes were considered supernatural. The (Continued on page 3)
2019-20 Colorado Rock Art Chapter Officers and Board

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<th>Role</th>
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<td>President</td>
<td>Teresa Weedin</td>
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<td>Vice-President</td>
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<td>Peter Faris, Donna Morgan, Darwin Thompson, Anne Whitfield</td>
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| Education       | Betsy Weitkamp              |

To contact any of the above, email: coloradorockartassociation@yahoo.com

Notes from the CRAA Board compiled by Lucy Burris

- No new information.

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, and Events compiled by Lucy Burris

Locations are in Colorado unless notes. Times are local times at the event location. "Livestream" in the location information means the event can be streamed. See the event web site for information.

On-going
- Michener Library, 1stFloor Gallery, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley. Exhibit of Pueblo pottery from the Department of Anthropology collection. [https://www.unco.edu/hss/anthropology/](https://www.unco.edu/hss/anthropology/)

Throughout 2020
- Free Entry to National Parks Days in 2020—January 20, April 18, August 25, September 26, and November 11. [https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/fee-free-parks.htm](https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/fee-free-parks.htm)

January 2020
- January 7, 6-7pm—Archaeology Southwest, Tucson, AZ and livestream. R.E. Burillo presents "Why You Should Experience Bears Ears". [https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/why-you-should-experience-bears-ears/](https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/why-you-should-experience-bears-ears/)
- January 8, 7 pm—San Juan Basin Archaeological Society, Durango. Connie Massingale presents "Creating

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How do you join our web lecture?

Join from your PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android, includes tablets and smart phones.
Starting at 6:45 pm on the webinar date you can join our web lecture using the information below.

1. Go to zoom.us and click "Join a Meeting" at top right and then enter our meeting number 613-694-4443. Follow the zoom application instructions. If you have used zoom before you will likely go straight to the lecture page. If you have problems, please call the help line below and a monitor will help you get online.
2. Click on this link http://zoom.us/j/6136944443 Follow the zoom application instructions. If you have used zoom before you will likely go straight to the lecture page. If you have problems, please email the help line below and Joel Humence will help you get online.
3. If you haven’t used zoom in recent months, be sure to update to the latest software version.

Help line. If you do have issues email coloradorockartassociation@yahoo.com with a description of the issue you are experiencing. We will have someone monitoring the email account from 6:45pm until 7:15pm.

Missed a past webinar?
Some of our past webinars are available to CRAA members in the "Members" section of the Colorado Rock Art Association web site.
1. SIGN AND GESTURE IN ROCK ART – PART 1: IMPLIED

There are many rock art enthusiasts who try to read written messages in the shapes and relationships of the elements of a pictograph or petroglyph. I have generally been a skeptic on this, I see no element of writing in North American rock art.

There is, however, one facet of this question that I have to confess might in some few cases have some validity. I am referring to portrayals of gestures that might have meaning in a sign-based system of communication. Carol Patterson has done some work with Australian Aboriginal and Hawaiian rock art where she found meanings in arm and leg positions which strike me as plausible.

We are accustomed to finding petroglyphs of Kachinas in the American southwest. Some of them can be identified by their markings and shapes. Severin Fowles (2013) points out that the identity of a kachina is also carried in his gestures and motions. "The Kachina dance, to be sure, involves masks and costumes that can be hung on walls and treated like art in a conventional sense, just as the overall choreography can be diagrammed and analyzed as a kind of finished product. It is quite clear, however, that the fluid series of gestural movements are themselves the source of the dance's potency. It is the dancer-in-motion - indeed, the community-in-motion that both makes and is made by the 'art'." (Fowles 2013:71) Perhaps this gesture and motion could also be portrayed by the position of parts of the image in a panel of rock art.

"Each is distinguished not only by the painting and decoration of his mask and body, but also by his songs, his dance step, his call, and his bearing. One moves across the plaza with long swaggering steps, another dances lightly from place to place, while a third moves with stately dignity." (Kennard 2002:4) In other words the identification of a Kachina would involve recognition of motion (gesture) as well as visual appearance. "These differences in dance steps serve to distinguish one Kachina from another; they become as essential characteristics as the painting and decoration of a mask." (Kennard 2002:12)

(Continued on page 5)
The viewer, recognizing the imagery of the mask and costume, associates the motions that go along with it mentally. In the vernacular of modern art this would be called "performance art", the image is only a remaining vestigial record of the gestures/performance that were the point in the first place.

On November 11, 2009 (see part 3 of this article), I posted a column in RockArtBlog titled Kachinas In Rock Art - The Shalako. In it I wrote the following about these fascinating beings. "One very distinctive example is the Shalako. Although they are not technically Kachinas, the Shalako dance in pueblo ceremonials like the Kachinas. Resembling giant birds, the Zuni Shalakos are up to ten feet tall. While dancing rhythmically, they clack their beaks. They dance till near sunrise. The tall, conical and long-necked form of the Shalako with their long beaks was probably derived from the Sandhill crane."

Rock art depictions of the Shalako can be dated back to the 14th century but its recent history is more complex. In her book Kachinas in the Pueblo World, Polly Schaafsma described the loss of much of the Kachina cult at Hopi. First through the efforts of the Spanish after their conquest of the southwest to eradicate native religions and supplant them with Christianity. This was conducted by the destruction of religious items and
shrines, even religious leaders on occasion. Among Pueblo peoples this was manifested by burning Kachina
masks, costumes and dolls, and outlawing the dances and ceremonies. Then in the nineteenth century Hopi
was swept by smallpox epidemics which killed many of the elders who possessed the ceremonial knowledge
necessary for the rites.

This was apparently the case with the Hopi Shalako. Its first recorded appearance at Hopi was in 1870 and
its second was in 1893. At the 1893 reappearance a Hopi informant stated that their Shalako ceremony had
not occurred for over 30 years. This Hopi Shalako was based on the Zuni Sio Shalako, but the ceremony was
Hopi based upon reconstructions from memories. Schaafsma relates this story on pages 142 and 143 of her
book Kachinas in the Pueblo World, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1994. She also related
how the lost Hopi Shalako returned to Second Mesa through the efforts of the great Hopi painter Fred Ko-
botie who painted a reproduction based upon two tablitas he found in the basement of the New Mexico
Museum of fine arts, and recognized them as belonging to the Hopi Shalako based on his memories of de-
scriptions by his grandfather.

Shalako depictions are found in rock art in the area of the Western Pueblos near both Hopi and Zuni, and
are also found in the Rio Grande area. The examples shown here are petroglyphs of Shalakos from west of
Albuquerque and from Galisteo dike east of the Rio Grande and south of Santa Fe, and a beautifully painted
contemporary pictograph of Shalako from the panel of Kachina masks at the Village of the Great Kivas near
Zuni." (Faris 2009)

The Shalako certainly have impressively distinctive shapes. "In the personization of these giants, the mask is
fastened to a stick, which is carried aloft by a man concealed by blankets which are extended by hoops to
Seeing the motions of this giant, birdlike being, with its head gracefully bobbing and dipping high in the air, would be an unforgettable experience. And seeing the image (the petroglyph or pictograph) of this being inevitably recalls the accompanying sounds and motions. For me it always happened when my grandchildren watched big bird on Sesame Street.

NOTE: Some images in this posting were retrieved from the internet with a search for public domain photographs. If any of these images are not intended to be public domain, I apologize, and will happily provide the picture credits if the owner will contact me with them. For further information on these reports you should read the original reports at the sites listed below.

REFERENCES:
Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, and Events (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)


- January 8-11—Society for Historical Archaeology Conference, Boston, MA. [https://sha.org/conferences/](https://sha.org/conferences/)
- January 9, 7pm—Colorado Archaeological Society, Indian Peaks Chapter, Boulder. Dr. Jason LaBelle presents "Of Hearth and Home: Investigating the Fossil Creek Site, an Early Ceramic Era Campsite in Larimer County, CO". [http://www.indianpeaksarchaeology.org/ipcas-lectures/upcoming-lectures](http://www.indianpeaksarchaeology.org/ipcas-lectures/upcoming-lectures)
- February 10, 6:30—Colorado Archaeological Society, Grand Junction Chapter. Fred Blackburn presents "Inscriptions on Walls at Aztec, New Mexico". [https://www.meetup.com/CAS-GJ/events/266009772/](https://www.meetup.com/CAS-GJ/events/266009772/)
- March 3-6—Friends of Cedar Mesa, Bluff, UT. Celebrate Cedar Mesa 2020. [https://www.friendsofcedarmesa.org/events/](https://www.friendsofcedarmesa.org/events/) (note that there is a space after the last "/" in this link)
- March 5-8—Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists Annual Meeting and Conference, Pueblo. [http://coloradoarchaeologists.org/meetings-events/annual-meeting/](http://coloradoarchaeologists.org/meetings-events/annual-meeting/)
Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, and Events (cont.)

(Continued from page 8)

- **March 11, 7pm—Archaeology Institute of America Lecture, Boulder.** Stephen Nash presents "Tree-ring Dating and the History of Archaeology in the American Southwest". [https://calendar.colorado.edu/event/an_embarrassment_of_riches_tree-ring_dating_and_the_history_of_archaeology_in_the_american_southwest#.XgkJGlVKjmg](https://calendar.colorado.edu/event/an_embarrassment_of_riches_tree-ring_dating_and_the_history_of_archaeology_in_the_american_southwest#.XgkJGlVKjmg)

**April and May**

- **April 7, 6-7pm—Archaeology Southwest, Tucson, AZ and livestream.** Dr. Paul Reed presents "Why You Should Experience Aztec and Salmon". [https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/why-you-should-experience-aztec-and-salmon/](https://www.archaeologysouthwest.org/event/why-you-should-experience-aztec-and-salmon/)
- **April 16-19—Montana Archaeological Society 62nd Annual Meeting, Polson, MT.** [http://mtarchaeologicalsociety.org/mas-meeting/](http://mtarchaeologicalsociety.org/mas-meeting/)
- **April 18—San Juan Basin Archaeological Society, Durango.** Rock art field trip to Bluff, UT. Registration required, limited to 10 participants, limited to SJBAS members. [http://www.sjbas.org/Trips.htm](http://www.sjbas.org/Trips.htm)
- **April 18, 4pm & April 19, 2pm—Tesaro Lecture Series, Littleton (18th) and Denver Public Library (19th – livestream).** Dr. Catherine Franklin presents "Much Ado About Custer: Rethinking the Indian Wars". [https://www.tesoroculturalcenter.org/historic-lecture-series/](https://www.tesoroculturalcenter.org/historic-lecture-series/)
- **April 22-26—Society for American Archaeology, 85th Annual Meeting, Austin, TX.** [https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting](https://www.saa.org/annual-meeting)
- **April 25, 4pm & April 26, 2-3pm—Tesaro Lecture Series, Littleton (25th) and Denver Public Library (26th – livestream).** John Steinle presents "The Great America Desert: Major Stephen Long's Colorado Expedition of 1820". [https://www.tesoroculturalcenter.org/historic-lecture-series/](https://www.tesoroculturalcenter.org/historic-lecture-series/)
- **May 8-10—Archaeological Society of New Mexico Annual Meeting, Taos, NM.** [https://taosarch.wildapricot.org/ASNM2020](https://taosarch.wildapricot.org/ASNM2020)

**Later in 2020**

- **June 5-8—American Rock Art Research Association Conference, Great Falls, MT.** [https://arara.wildapricot.org](https://arara.wildapricot.org)

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2. SIGN AND GESTURE IN ROCK ART – PART 2: THE CREATIVE PROCESS

One final aspect of the subject of motion in rock art involves the motions that created the imagery in the first place. Severin Fowles, the chair of the American Studies Department and an Associate Professor in the Anthropology Department of Barnard College, Columbia University has investigated exactly that in Comanche petroglyphs in the Rio Grande river canyon in northern New Mexico.

In an area with a large quantity of pecked rock art the imagery identified as Comanche is composed of faint scratches. "The Comanches scratched rather than pecked their images, however, presumably because the performed gesture was as, or even more, important than the icon produced. The pecked horse may look like a horse in the end, but the process of pecking - of repeated staccato impacts - does not have any quality of the horse about it. The Comanche horse icon, on the other hand, was composed of arcing lines that move in a very horse-like way across the rock surface. This is nicely depicted in Figure 3a (top at right), which documents a horse raid in progress. One could call the horses scratched on this panel stylized, or even abstract, but only when referring to the icon left behind. During the
process of creation - during the image's performance - the artist would have been representing the horse and its characteristic galloping motions quite faithfully, very much as a Chinese calligrapher might seek to mimic the flight of geese in the movement of his wrist as he painted lines on parchment. Figure 3b (above) offers another example of a horse raid in progress. The original, like so many others, is barely visible in the field. However, in the sea of arcing lines, one senses again that it was the repetitive hand motions that would have most palpably signified the movement of the horses and the impressive size of the herd. A successful Comanche raid in which many horses had been captured was being recollected and reenacted through iconographic performance. From a Comanche perspective, these performances need to be understood as an extension of the Plains Sign Language (PSL) tradition, in which the Comanches were renowned participants." (Fowles 2013: 74-5)

In other words, the viewer, recognizing the imagery, mentally associates with it the motions that go along with its creation. We can picture a Comanche warrior telling the story of the horse raid described by Fowles (above) making a wavy motion with his hand and arm to illustrate how the herd of horses ran, and that the curved lines of the backs of the horses illustrated in the rock art panel also convey this motion.

In the vernacular of modern art this would be called "performance art", the image is only a remaining vestigial record of the gestures/performance that were the point in the first place. The modern beginnings of performance art were influenced by Jackson Pollock whose "drip" paintings could be seen as a record of all of the motions he made to produce them. "Bolstered by photographs of Jackson Pollock in his studio, moving dance-like around a canvas on the floor, artists began to see the artist's creative act as equally important, if not more so, to the artwork produced. In this light, Pollock's distinctive drips, spills, and splatters appeared as a mere remnant, a visible trace left over from the moment of creation." (Spivey 2019)
Eventually, of course, "performance art" evolved to the stage where it was only action or situation or action with no physical remaining vestige, but that development goes beyond the scope of my discussion here. Whatever I believe Fowles is saying, and certainly what my point is here, would relate to the early stages where there is a physical remnant of the performance, in this case the Comanche rock art panel of a horse raid. Had the imagery been the only important goal, then why would they not have made the lines deeper, more permanent and visible. Of course, such light scratching is more visible when freshly produced, but soon weathers to the state we now find it in. It does not appear to have been consciously produced primarily to be a perpetual record. In Fowles words: "the rock art's illegibility becomes, paradoxically, its greatest virtue. Simply put, it would be very difficult to argue that these images were created in order to be viewed, after the fact, by and audience (archaeological or otherwise)." (Fowles 2013:72)

So, here we seem to have a probable case of gesture recorded in rock art. Does this apply everywhere, to all rock art? Most certainly not, indeed, most petroglyphs were created with lines of varying depth to be a long-lasting record or image. But Fowles has illustrated that, at least in this case, it may just be, as he put it "indeed the primary 'image', we propose, was not the scratched icon left behind, but instead the gestural hand and body movements of the rock art as a performative event." (Fowles 2013:67)

NOTE: I wish to thank Severin Fowles, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College, Columbia University, for providing me with the illustrations, his paper, and the permission to use them.

REFERENCES:

3. KACHINAS IN ROCK ART - THE SHALAKO
(Illustrations are the same as shown in Part 1 of this article)

Although they are not technically kachinas, the shalakos dance in pueblo ceremonials like the kachinas. Resembling giant birds, the Zuni shalakos are up to ten feet tall. While dancing rhythmically, they clack their beaks. They dance until near sunrise. The tall, conical, and long-necked form of the shalako with their long beaks was probably derived from the sandhill crane.

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tury Hopi was swept by smallpox epidemics which killed many of the elders who possessed the ceremonial knowledge necessary for the rites.

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Shalako depictions are found in rock art in the area of the Western pueblos near both Hopi and Zuni, and are also found in the Rio Grande area. The examples shown here are petroglyphs of shalakos from west of Albuquerque and from Galisteo Dike east of the Rio Grande and south of Santa Fe, and a beautifully painted contemporary pictograph of shalako from the panel of kachina masks at the Village of the Great Kivas near Zuni.

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, and Events (cont.)

(Continued from page 9)

- August 6-9—Pecos Conference, Mancos, CO. https://www.pecosconference.org/
- October 22-25—Texas Archaeological Society 91st Annual Meeting, Houston, TX. https://www.txarch.org/tas-annual-meeting
- November 4-7—78th Plains Anthropological Conference, Boulder, CO. https://plainsanthropologicalsociety.org/annual-meeting/future

Information is accurate at the time of preparation but check the listed web sites for specific details and any changes. Check the listed web sites for any fees, membership, and advance registration requirements. Listing does not imply endorsement by the Colorado Rock Art Association.