

## IFRAO Report No. 22

# Third AURA Congress

Hosted by the Australian Rock Art Research Association in Alice Springs, 10 - 14 July 2000

## Millennium: a fresh start

### OBJECTIVES

The AURA Congress is the premier academic event in the field of rock art research. The principal objectives of the Third AURA Congress are to enhance that reputation, to offer the foremost rock art scholars of the world a common forum for presenting their most recent research results and theoretical constructs, and to provide the discipline with the intellectual and ideological stimulus to take it into a brave new century. The dawn of a millennium presents an opportunity to review what has been achieved and what may be achievable, and to preview what the future may have in store for this field of research.

### ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The following thematic symposia are expected to be included:

- ROCK ART AND COLONIALISM: SOUTH AFRICA, AUSTRALIA AND BEYOND.** Chaired by Sven Ouzman (South Africa) and Claire Smith (Australia).
- CONSTRUCTED LANDSCAPES: ROCK ART, PLACE AND IDENTITY.** Chaired by Bruno David and Meredith Wilson (Australia).
- ROCK ART, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLANS: REGIONAL PROJECTS.** Chaired by Dario Seglie (Italy).
- ROCK ART EDUCATION AND ETHICS.** Chaired by Dario Seglie (Italy).
- ROCK ART MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SITE VISITORS.** Chaired by Natalie Franklin (Australia) and Elena Miklashevich (Russia).
- ROCK ART AND RECONCILIATION.** Chaired by Noelene Cole and John Campbell (Australia).
- AESTHETICS OF ROCK ART.** Chaired by Thomas Heyd (Canada) and John Clegg (Australia).
- ROCK ART AND INDIGENOUS ASTRONOMIES.**

- Chaired by Philip Clarke and Hugh Cairns (Australia).
- CENTRAL AND NORTHERN AUSTRALIAN ROCK-MARKINGS: ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVES.** Chaired by Graeme Ward (Australia).
- INDIGENOUS PERCEPTIONS BY THE USERS AND MAKERS OF ROCK ART.** Chaired by F. Prins (South Africa) and J. Drew (Australia).
- ROCK ART AND ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE.** Chaired by Paul Faulstich (U.S.A.), Paul Taçon (Australia) and David Bennett (Australia).
- DATING ROCK ART.** Chaired by Alan Watchman (Australia), Marian Hyman (U.S.A.) and Marvin Rowe (U.S.A.).
- EPISTEMOLOGY AND ROCK ART RESEARCH.** Chaired by R. G. Bednarik (Australia) and K. K. Chakravarty (India).
- NEWS OF THE WORLD II — IRAC 2000.** Chaired by Angelo Fossati (Italy) and Paul Bahn (U.K.). Invited papers only.
- SETTING THE SCENE: THE ALICE SPRINGS AND REGIONAL CONTEXT.** Chaired by G. Ward and C. San Roque (Australia). Invited papers only.
- OPEN SESSION (t.b.a.).**

Rationales for these proposed symposia appear on the previous pages and potential contributors are cordially invited to send the titles of their papers together with abstracts to a symposium chair or to the *RAR* Editor. There are also several round table sessions and exhibitions planned. Preference will be given to papers presented in English. Approximately 180 papers will be accepted, plus 20 stand-by papers. Most presentations will be published after refereeing, and within two years of the Congress. The Congress Program will list the abstracts of all papers accepted for presentation.

### EVENTS

Besides the academic program, the Congress involves a

number of special events, including the IFRAO Meeting of 2000, the Annual General Meeting of AURA, various presentations by indigenous Australians, an opening ceremony, official functions, a substantial program of field trips and excursions, both before and after the academic program, and it is expected that a group of traditional Aboriginal site custodians will stage a sacred sand painting ceremony in honour of the assembled scholars. Other special events will be announced over the next year. They will include exhibitions of posters, Aboriginal art, rock art books, and the presentation of films about rock art.

## FIELD TRIPS

A traditional feature of the AURA Congress is its program of field trips. AURA 2000 will offer a substantial program, extending for several weeks before and after the academic proceedings. It is expected to cover the major rock art regions of the Australian continent. The program is still being developed, and its final shape will depend largely on the responses to the questionnaire on the Registration Form. Essentially, there are two types of field trips: short trips centring on Alice Springs and involving 1-3 days, and long trips requiring from a few days to several weeks.

*Short field trips:* These include day trips to rock art sites near Alice Springs, such as Emily Gap and N'Dahla Gorge, and trips ranging as far as Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Cave Hill. Every effort will be made to involve the relevant Aboriginal site custodians in these excursions.

*Long field trips:* Typically, these will be led by individual rock art scholars who have agreed to guide a group of colleagues to the regions or site complexes they have researched. Their time and knowledge are provided free in some cases, in others they may set a fee to compensate them for costs. Some of the field trips are semi-commercial, particularly where their organisation involves the use of aircraft and thoroughly planned itineraries. In short, there are field trips for every budget and special interest. Currently gazetted alternatives are:

1. Ken Mulvaney: Victoria and Keep Rivers (pre-Congress, 1-2 weeks). Site visits will involve the traditional owners and include Jimmim and Grannilpi (*Antiquity* 71: 942-65), sites in Keep River National Park and Weaber Range (*RAR* 13: 3-20; also *RAR* 8: 36-46). Probably camping at Marralum Aboriginal community or Spirit Hills homestead, travel via Kununurra. This may be linked with trip No. 2.
2. Pat Vinnicombe and Lee Scott Virtue: Pilbara and Kimberley (pre-Congress). Departs Karratha, W.A., about 1 July 2000, by private vehicles, reaches Alice Springs in time for Congress.
3. Caryll Sefton: rock art in New South Wales, Olary region, Flinders Ranges (pre-Congress, some weeks). By bus and private vehicles.
4. David Welch: Arnhem Land, Kimberley. Private vehicles and bus (*RAR* 7: 110-24, 13: 104-23, 14: 88-112).

## Kimberley rock paintings

5. John Clegg: Sydney to Broken Hill (pre-Congress). From Broken Hill to Alice Springs by air.
6. Helen Read: Kimberley rock art. Travel by aircraft to remote sites, guided by traditional custodians.
7. Hilary and Hugh Cairns: Grand Tour (post-Congress). This is hoped to connect with the David Welch tour to Kakadu and Arnhem Land, continue to the Victoria River District with Bill Harney, with Lee Scott Virtue to the Kimberleys, and to the Pilbara with Robert Bednarik (c. four weeks). (H. Cairns, Tel. 612-9327 1488)
8. Trezise Bush Camp: Laura region, north Queensland. Jowalbinna and Deighton River sites (Gary Hill, Tel. 617-4051 4777)
9. Noelene Cole and Ang-Gnarra: Cape York Peninsula, including Laura and Chillagoe, with Aboriginal custodians.

The costs of these major field trips depends on duration, means of transport, type of accommodation, and cost of commercial operators and Aboriginal guides where they are involved. On a self-drive tour, several participants would typically hire a vehicle and provide own camping gear. This system has worked well on previous AURA tours.

## REGISTRATION

The AURA Treasurer has set the following registration fees for the Third AURA Congress:

*Prior to 31 March 2000:* Professional members \$A190, other AURA members \$A130, student and concession members \$A60, non-members \$A250 (US\$125, 86, 40 and 165 respectively).

*After March 2000:* Professional members \$A220, other AURA members \$A160, student and concession members \$A90, non-members \$A280 (US\$145, 106, 60 and 185).

'Professional members' are AURA members professionally employed in a field academically related to congress topics. 'Concession members' are retired persons or are from developing countries. All registration fees paid will be refunded in case of non-attendance. AURA membership will be available at the registration desk (minimum of three years). One staff member of institu-

tional AURA members may attend at member's rates. Please register for the Congress by completing the Registration Form.

## ACCOMMODATION AND BOOKINGS

Most accommodation venues of Alice Springs have been inspected by the AURA Secretary, and about thirty have provided special offers for Congress delegates. The best offers have been selected and are listed on the Registration Form. Accommodation secured by the Congress ranges from caravan park camping sites, through back packers venues and budget motels to expensive luxury hotels. It is to be noted that in Alice Springs, July is in the peak of the tourist season, and pre-booking of accommodation is essential.

We are pleased to announce that Qantas has been appointed official airline for the Congress. As a special conference fare has been negotiated for delegates attending, we suggest you contact Qantas Associated Sales to avail yourself of this offer. A discount of up to 45% off the full economy airfare, excluding taxes at the time of booking, has been negotiated for the Congress, subject to seat availability in group class. Please quote the Association Profile Number, which is

**1206125**

and destination and date of conference when making your reservation. Please note that the applicable discount is available for domestic travel within Australia only and is subject to payment and ticketing conditions.

The Qantas Association Sales telephone number within Australia is (toll free) 1800 684 880. International delegates can contact their local Qantas office for the best available fare of the day.

Please note that it is essential that the above Association Profile Number be quoted in any bookings with Qantas; for every 50 air tickets booked under the number, the Congress will gain one free international ticket for one delegate from a developing country.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Full information about Alice Springs, its climate, the field trips and other aspects of the Congress will be provided in the November 1999 issue of *RAR*.

I commend the members of the Congress Planning Committee most sincerely for their outstanding enthusiasm, and I thank them for their time. The Committee consists of Hilary Cairns, Dr Hugh C. Cairns, Julie Drew, Brett J. Galt-Smith, R. G. Kimber, Peter Latz, Craig San Roque, Dr Graeme Ward and Peter Yates. It needs to be appreciated that some of these committee members have travelled half-way across a continent at their own expense to contribute to the preparations for this event! I thank the Committee members most sincerely for their invaluable work.

R. G. Bednarik  
Chairman, AURA Congress

## News in brief

*Institutum Canarium*, a member of IFRAO for several years, is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. It is therefore the oldest existing research association dealing with rock art worldwide. Besides this main focus of interest, the international association with its headquarters in Austria is engaged in questions of archaeology, anthropology and ethnology, as well as with natural sciences such as geology and mineralogy. Its principal working field covers the Canary Islands, Iberian Peninsula and northern Africa. During the last three decades IC has published thirty volumes of the journal *Almogaren*, containing some 400 contributions.

*The Brandberg Trust* was formed in Windhoek in 1998, for the purpose of conserving the Brandberg's unique and fragile environment and protecting its wonderful collection of rock art. There are probably up to 1500 rock art sites in the Brandberg. From 1978 until his death in 1985, Harald Pager lived and worked on the Upper

Brandberg and together with his two assistants, Angula Shipahu and Ephraim Mateus, rediscovered hundreds of sites. During this time he copied some 43 000 rock paintings onto 7000 metres of tracing foil and surveyed nearly a thousand sites.

Donations are invited: The Brandberg Trust, c/o Namibia Nature Foundation, P.O. Box 245, Windhoek, Namibia.

*CIARU* (Centro de Investigación de Arte Rupestre del Uruguay) is undertaking an intensive campaign to preserve pre-Historic rock art located in central Uruguay.

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Visit the IFRAO Home Page on  
<http://www.cesmap.it/ifrao/ifrao.html>