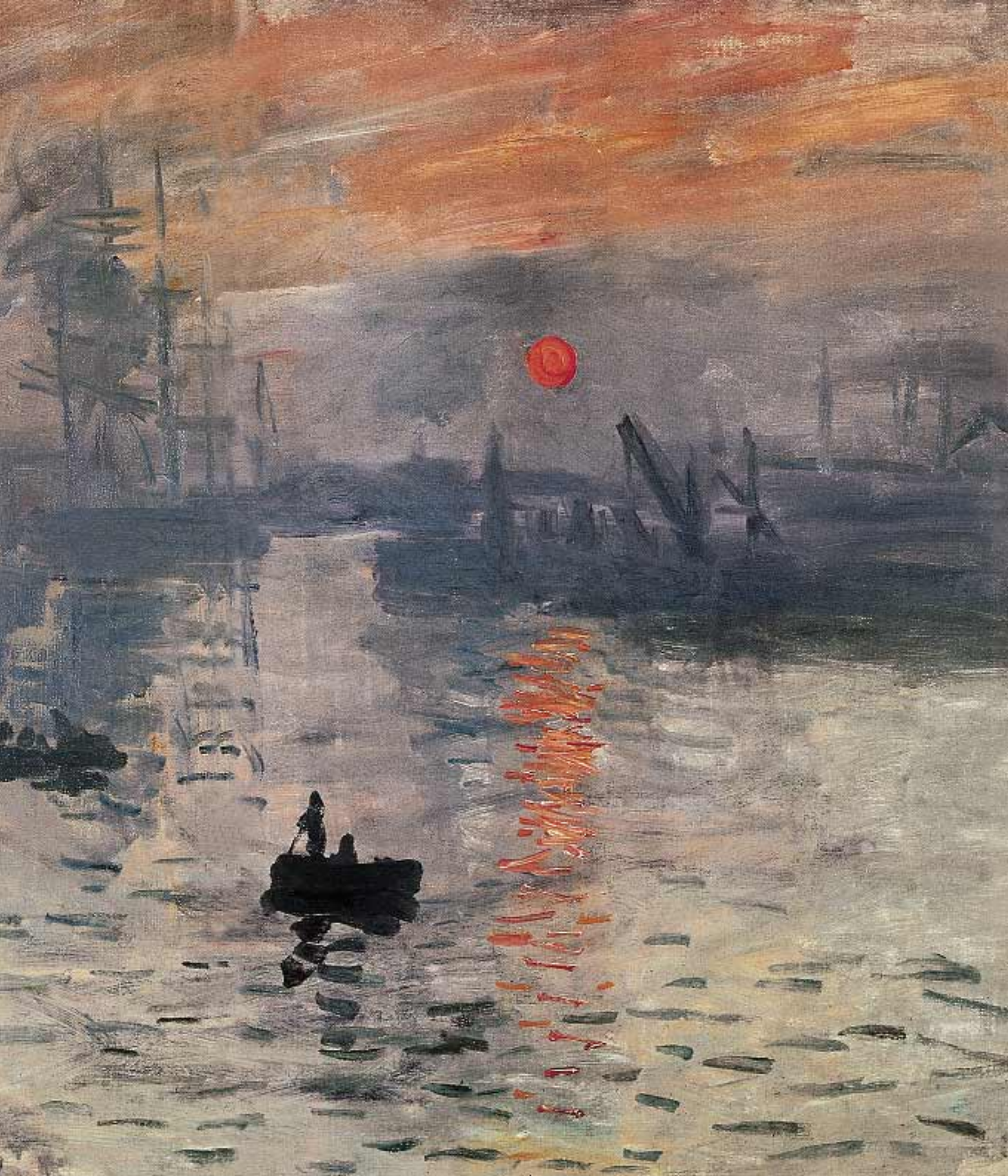




13 Art Inventions Children Should Know



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Contents



4 • Painting—Rhinoceroses in Europe



8 • Weather in Art—The First Painting of a Snowball Fight



10 • Central Perspective —Spaces Become Real



14 • The Self-Portrait—Artists Look at Themselves in the Mirror



18 • Landscape Painting—Bible Stories Outside Our Front Door



22 • Copperplate Engraving—The Beginnings of Mass Media



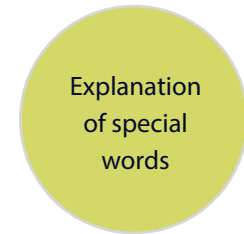
24 • Photography—
Pictures without
Paint or Paintbrush

Inventions change the world. Throughout history, clever people have come across ideas for how you can make something better or create something completely new.

Inventions are important in art too. Sometimes they are completely new ideas, such as an original way of painting something; and sometimes they are ideas that have nothing to do with art, but which have an important effect on art.

In this book you will find 13 inventions that changed art or helped to develop it further. Timelines will show you other things that were discovered or invented in art history. Some words that you may not know yet are explained in the glossary. And there are also tips, ideas, and suggestions for how you can find out more about all the inventions you see here. You will even find a few quiz questions to answer.

Have fun!



44 • Glossary



42 • Graffiti—
The City as Canvas



40 • Action Painting—
Splashy Art



38 • The Readymade—
Everyday Objects in Art



28 • The Paint Tube—
Out of the Studio!



34 • Abstract Art—
Feelings Turn Into Paintings



32 • The Cartoon—Pictures Learn to Speak

30,000 B.C. The first paintings are created

46,000 B.C. 44,000 42,000 40,000 38,000 36,000 34,000 32,000 30,000 28,000 26,000 24,000



invention:

Painting

invented by:

Prehistoric People

Invented:

About 15,000–30,000
years ago

Place:

Southern France

Painting— Rhinoceroses in Europe

Pictures that are 15,000–30,000 years old have been found on the walls of caves in France and Spain. They mark the beginning of painting.

If we are talking about inventions in art, we should start at the very beginning of art itself. That was a very long time ago. To get an idea of just how long ago, try to imagine your great-grandfather; and then imagine another thousand “greats” on top of that. Then you would arrive back at the time when painting was invented, about 30,000 years ago.

In those days, the animals living in Europe were very different from the ones we know today: woolly rhinoceroses, mammoths, cave bears, giant deer called megaloceroses, and even hyenas. The people still lived in caves. And it was here that they began to paint the animals on the walls.

The first artists created their animal drawings with pieces of charred wood. To make them look more realistic, they added colors using different kinds of soils, ground stones, and plants. That was how they invented paints. They probably frayed the ends of branches to make paintbrushes.

All that is very impressive, but the paintings themselves are even more remarkable. As far as we know they are the oldest pictures humankind has ever produced. And you might think that because people had





Wall paintings in the cave at Lascaux
c. 15,000 B.C., Cave at Lascaux, Montignac

In a recreation of the cave at Lascaux, in southern France, you can experience for yourself what it must have felt like to live in a cave.

Did you know?

In the cave at Chauvet, France, where the oldest paintings in the world were discovered, scientists also found the oldest human footprints. They are thought to have been left by a 12-year-old child, and they are over 26,000 years old.



Rhinoceros

c. 30,000 B.C.,
Cave at Chauvet, near
Vallon-Pont-d'Arc

As you can see on this wall painting, there were rhinoceroses living in Europe 30,000 years ago, and some of them even had enormous horns.

only just invented painting, they would perhaps not be very good at it yet. But you would be wrong! The first painters were real artists! They managed to paint animals on the cave walls that were so realistic, you might almost think they were alive.

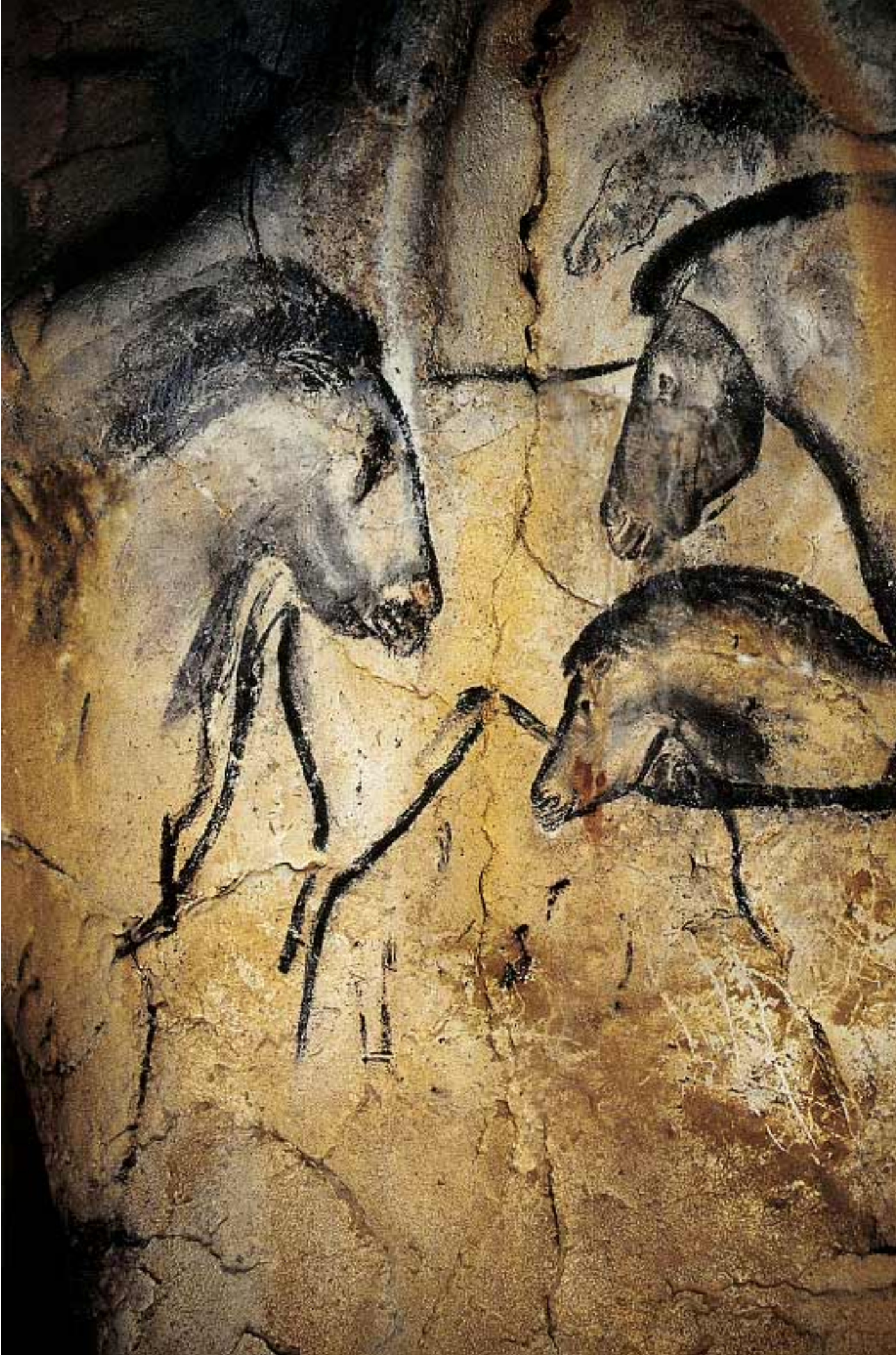
Nowadays we do not know why those people so long ago painted pictures of animals on cave walls. They certainly didn't do it to make the walls look prettier, as we might do today by hanging up a poster or a picture in our room. The ancient paintings are found deep in the cave, where it is completely dark, and the people who made them would have possessed only a few torches to provide dim light. Such artworks were probably painted as part of a cult: the people in those days probably thought that the pictures possessed magic powers. They might even have believed that by painting certain animals, they could gain power over those creatures and hunt them more successfully. In fact, many ancient cultures saw magic in images, and things have not really changed to this day. Just think of all the photos of people we love. In reality, they are no more than lifeless images on paper. But we still look at these pictures when we feel lonely; and when we think of the people they represent, we may even feel a bit better. So pictures are more closely linked to our thoughts and feelings than we realize.

The animal pictures that you can see on these pages were discovered in 1994 in the caves at Chauvet, France. They are about 30,000 years old and are very delicate, so you are not allowed to visit them. But you can visit another place in southern France where ancient cave paintings were produced. An exact copy of the famous cave at Lascaux was built near the original cave, and the paintings were copied onto the walls. So here, for a short while at least, you can feel like a prehistoric person.

Why don't you try to create your own miniature "cave painting"?

First, take a close look at your favorite pet. Now go outdoors and find a large, flat rock. After cleaning the rock, use crayons or paints to make a portrait of your pet on the rock's flat surface.





Horses

c. 30,000 B.C.,
Cave at Chauvet, near
Vallon-Pont-d'Arc

This painting is so dynamic that it seems as if the cave artist has painted the four horses running. The front animal must be a foal, or baby horse, because it is quite a bit smaller than the other three.

Weather in Art—The First Painting of a Snowball Fight



Invention:

The weather is painted realistically for the first time.

Invented by:

Master Wenceslas (died c. 1410 in Trento)

Invented:

c. 1404–1407

Place:

Trento, Italy

Renaissance* painters began to show the weather and the seasons in a way that was true to nature.

Artists, of course, did not discover the weather. And during the Middle Ages, the weather did not interest them either, as most of the stories they painted were about God and the saints. These pictures often showed the sky as a gold or an expensive blue* background. You could almost say that in medieval pictures, the weather and the seasons didn't exist at all. Painters did not even try to paint nature "accurately." When painting a mountainous landscape, for example, medieval artists didn't even think to look at a proper mountain and try to recreate it as accurately as possible.

After the Middle Ages, however, all that changed. Renaissance* artists began to take an interest once more in ways of painting nature truthfully. And to help them do that, they "rediscovered" the weather in their paintings, so to speak. One artist even depicted the joys of a winter landscape.

Quiz question

Where can you find history's first picture of a snowball?

(Solution on page 46)

La Tempesta (The Tempest)

Giorgione, 1508, Venice, Accademia

In ancient times, people thought you could not draw lightning. The Italian artist Giorgione was the first person who succeeded in painting a flash of lightning.



Master Wenceslas lived in about 1400 in a castle in South Tyrol, a mountainous area in what is now northern Italy. In one of the castle's rooms, the bishop for whom he worked wanted him to paint pictures representing the twelve months of the year and the various jobs completed during those months. So Master

Masaccio 1401–1428

c. 1390–1441 Jan van Eyck

1453 Constantinople is conquered by the Turks

1400 Italian artist Cennino Cennini publishes the most important textbook on painting in the late Middle Ages

1400

1405

1410

1415

1420

1425

1430

1435

1440

1445

1450

1455



Wenceslas painted people sowing seeds, harvesting crops, picking grapes, chopping down trees, and doing many other things. For January he had a very original idea. Since it is not possible to work in the fields in January, he showed the grand lord and lady of the manor enjoying themselves in the snow. Here, for the very first time in art, Master Wenceslas painted a real snowy landscape. He did not invent the snowball fight, of course, but he was certainly the first person to paint one.

Winter

Master Wenceslas, c. 1404–1407, Trento, Castello del Buonconsiglio, Torre d'Aquila (The Eagle's Tower)

Although the countryside is covered with snow, there is no snow on the castle roofs and there are green bushes growing in the garden. Strangely enough, the man in the garden and the huntsman are bigger than the castle walls. Master Wenceslas had not yet learned the rules of central perspective. You can read about those rules in the next chapter.