

**New views on old hands: the context of stencils in El Castillo and La Garma caves
(Cantabria, Spain)**

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Hand stencils are an intriguing feature of prehistoric imagery in caves and rockshelters in several parts of the world, and the recent demonstration that the oldest of those in Western Europe date back almost to 37 000 years or earlier further enhances their significance. Their positioning within the painted caves of France and Spain is far from random, but responds to the shapes and fissures in the cave walls. Made under conditions of low and flickering light, the authors suggest that touch—‘palpation’—as much as vision, would have driven and directed the locations chosen for these stencils. Detailed study of the images in two Cantabrian caves also allows different individuals to be distinguished, most of whom appear to have been female. Finally, the project reveals deliberate associations between the stencils and features on the cave walls.

Keywords: Cantabria, El Castillo, La Garma, Palaeolithic art, painted caves, hand stencils, palpation

Table S1. List of caves in France, Spain and Italy with Upper Palaeolithic hand stencils or prints. Prints in clay are excluded.

Country	Caves	
France	Abri du Poisson	Bara-Bahau
	Baume-Latrone	Bayol
	Bédeilhac	Bernifal
	Grotte du Bison	Bourgneton
	Chauvet	Cheval
	Les Combarelles	Combe Negre
	Cosquer	Ebbou
	Erberua	Les Fieux
	Font de Gaume	Les Garennes
	Gargas	Grand Grotte at Arcy-sur-Cure
	Labattut	Moulin de Laguenay
	Les Merveilles (Rocamadour)	Oxocelhaya
	Pech Merle	Le Portel
	Roucadour	Tibiran
Trois-Frères	Roc de Vezac	
Spain	Altamira	Ardales
	Askondo	El Castillo
	Cudón	Fuente de Salin
	Fuente del Trucho	La Garma
	La Lastrilla	Maltravieso
	La Pasiega	El Pindal
	Tito Bustillo	
Italy	Paglicci	

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