



# San Diego Rock Art Association Meeting

## Sunday, October 5, 2014

Kumeyaay-Ipai Interpretive Center  
13104 Ipai Waaypuk Trail (formerly Silver Lake Drive)  
Poway, CA 92064

# Haunted Landscape

A Multi-Year Study of Archaic Pictographs in the Grand Canyon of Arizona



**Jerry Dickey**

Co-author with Don Christensen and Steve Freers of *Rock Art of the Grand Canyon Region*

It has been my good fortune to be able to study and record rock art in the Grand Canyon region for the past 22 years and, in the course of that study, to discover a particular style of Late Archaic period painting that appeals to me in a way unlike any other occurrence of Southwestern rock art. This rock art is restricted to a fairly isolated and spectacular landscape within the Canyon, a natural setting that has the effect of bringing one closer to the people whose impressive skill and effort went into the creation of these paintings. Unfortunately, the older rock art is, the more difficult it becomes to rationally comprehend its function. Yet these Archaic images still resonate across the millennia to affect our curiosity and imagination. We know that rock art is more than just a simplistic artistic expression and can actually offer us clues regarding the ideological mindset of its creators—if we can correctly assemble contextual evidence and apply acceptable theoretical models. As we record more sites, enlarge our motif database, gain access to ongoing archaeological findings, and analyze all relevant data, we can more confidently hypothesize as to its possible function—for serious rock art research focuses on function rather than meaning.

In this review I will compare this Late Archaic style of Grand Canyon rock art to another style of painting in the immediate area that dates to the same general time period and discuss possible connections between the two within a contextual overview of the Archaic Period in the Grand Canyon. The importance of the physical landscape will also be examined, and various details that have arisen out of the study of this rock art will be discussed. Finally I will look at several theories that have been advanced concerning rock art interpretation and provide some general thoughts on how certain aspects of these theories might be applied to further our understanding of the function of these Late Archaic Period paintings in the Grand Canyon.

**Rock Art 2014 Symposium now sponsored by SDRAA.  
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- 4:00 Potluck: Bring food of your choice to share
- 5:00 Meeting • 6:00 Presentation

Meetings are included in your SDRAA Membership. Suggested Donation for Guests is \$5.00.

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