Assignment 2 · Form and Function in Prehistoric Art
Due: Thursday, February 20, 2020

Part A: Review Chapter 1 of Janson’s Basic History of Western Art,¹ pp. 22-31

Answer all of the following questions in a short essay (intro, body, conclusion), type-written, double-spaced, and with citations for any information gathered from a source other than Janson’s.

1. What was depicted on Paleolithic cave walls? (be thorough and elaborate on what has been discovered). Give an example of a work that depicts this subject matter. Include the image and label—-it need not be in color.

2. What purpose did these cave images most likely serve? (use relevant art terminology)

3. What complicates our understanding of these works?

Part B: Create a replica sculpture

1. With the clay provided, you are to sculpt your own small replica of ONE of these Prehistoric sculptures, Male Figure from Cernavoda OR Female Figure from Cernavoda. Submit your sculpture in the plastic bag labeled with your name; incise your initials into the sculpture if you are choosing to have your replica fired.

2. Along with your sculpture, submit a 1 to 2 page reflection on your experience creating this work. What is your reaction to this process?

Consider the following questions:

• Which sculpture did you replicate?
• What methods of sculpting did you utilize? Carved and/or modeled, additive and/or subtractive methods? Other?
• What tools did you use and how did they work for you?
• Define the predominant shapes in the work. Are they geometric or organic? Explain.
• Is this work of art representational, abstract, or non-representational? Explain.
• What did you learn about sculpting? What did you learn about your materials?
• What would you need to know in order to successfully sculpt such a figure?
• What is your perception of the sculptor(s) who created these figures?

For your reference, the images of these figural works are on the website under the Prehistoric Art slide presentation. For tools to sculpt, think as Prehistoric man and use materials like stone, bones, and/or twigs to fashion what you need. And, do not forget the most important tool, your own hands!

To keep the clay from drying out between working sessions wrap it in plastic, or keep it in the sealed bag. If you find that the clay is beginning to dry out, wrap the clay with a moist paper towel, and store it in the sealed bag until it absorbs the moisture. Keeping your hands moist also helps. Do not add water to the bag of clay as this will make liquid clay, also known as slip.

You will not be graded on your artistic abilities; I will be looking for effort. Therefore, enjoy the creative process.

¹Any resources referenced must be footnoted using the Chicago Manual of Style. To add footnotes in Microsoft Word, simply go to the ‘References’ tab at the top of your page and click on ‘Insert Footnote’; Word will automatically format the page to allow for the footnote text to be entered at the bottom of the page. In Apple Pages, simply go to the ‘Insert’ tab at the top of your page and scroll down to ‘Footnote’; again, Pages will format the page for you automatically.