

Outline of HPC Presentation on Rock Art in the McDowell Mountains

- Introduction to rock art
- Summary of ARAC's McDowell Mountain Rock Art Inventory
- Description of rock art styles
- Photos of Archaic and Hohokam style Elements in McDowell Mountains



What is rock art?

- Designs that are pecked, scratched, or painted on rock
 - Petroglyphs are pecked/scratched
 - Pictographs are painted with pigments
- Petroglyphs are made by carving away the darker surface layer, called desert varnish or patina, to expose lighter rock color beneath



Who made the rock art?

- Archaic – Hunter and Gatherers
- Hohokam – Canal builders, desert farmers
- Yavapai
- European Settlers



When was it made?

- Rock art in the McDowell Mountains dates from thousands of years old (Archaic) to recent (Ranching)
- Much harder to date rock art than dwellings or pottery
- Age indicated by weathering and re-patination



What was its purpose?

- Many speculative ideas on the purpose or function of rock art
 - Signs, boundaries, travel maps
 - Language/expressions, storytelling
 - Good luck omens, clan symbols
 - Ceremonial, religious/sacred images
 - People, animals; depict scenes like hunting
 - Astrological – sun, moon, stars
 - Solstice or equinox markings, seasonal, calendars
 - Related to sexual/fertility rituals, coming-of-age ceremonies
 - Illustration of transformation or visions
 - Artistic expression or doodling?



What did ARAC do?

- The McDowell Mountain Rock Art Inventory was a volunteer project in 2006 and 2007
- Arizona Rock Art Coalition members approached city about collecting data on rock art
- About 600 hours by volunteers
- 42 Petroglyph sites in Preserve and in County Park
- ARAC Forms and photos now in City database for reference
- Very useful for understanding and monitoring sites



What are the basic styles?

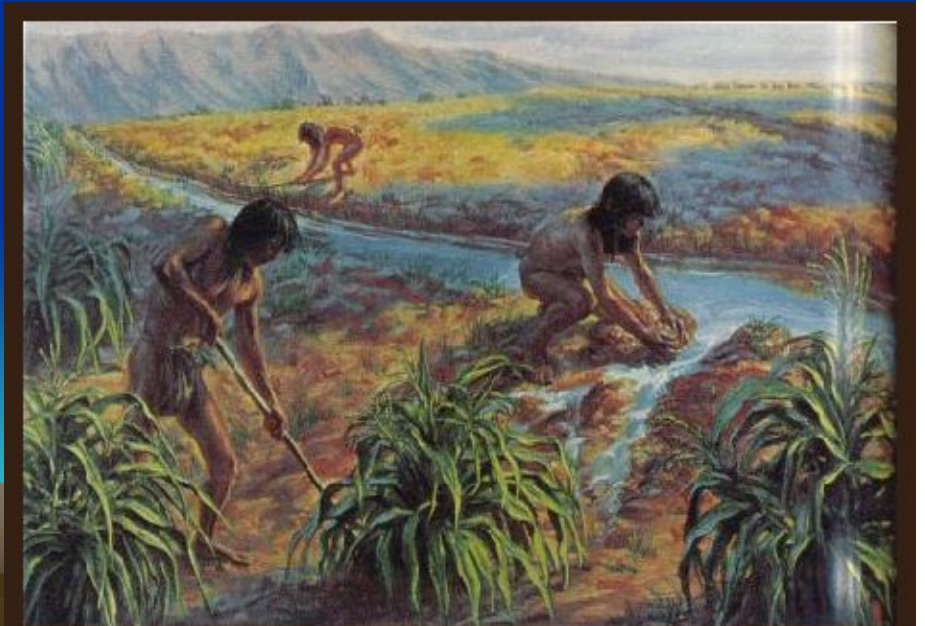
- Abstract - usually geometric with heavy lines
- Representational depicting recognizable figures – people or animals



Have the different styles of Southwestern rock art been given names?

Yes by Polly Schaafsma based on who made:

- Western Archaic (5000 BC to 200 AD)
- Hohokam/Gila Style (700 to 1100 AD)
- Yavapai Style (1500-1700 AD) often hard to differentiate from other styles
- Historic Euro-American (after 1800 AD) – cowboys, homesteaders, hunters, vandals



How can you tell which cultural group created a petroglyph?

- Style and elements (individual glyphs) differ between Archaic, Hohokam and Yavapai.
- Also amount of patina over glyph, called re-patination, helps to judge age created



Archaic Common Elements/Forms

- Both abstract line elements and curvilinear lines including ladders, grids, rakes, and circles
- Also Xs and asterisks, chevrons, lines of small tick marks



Archaic Rock Art in the McDowell Mountains by Element Type



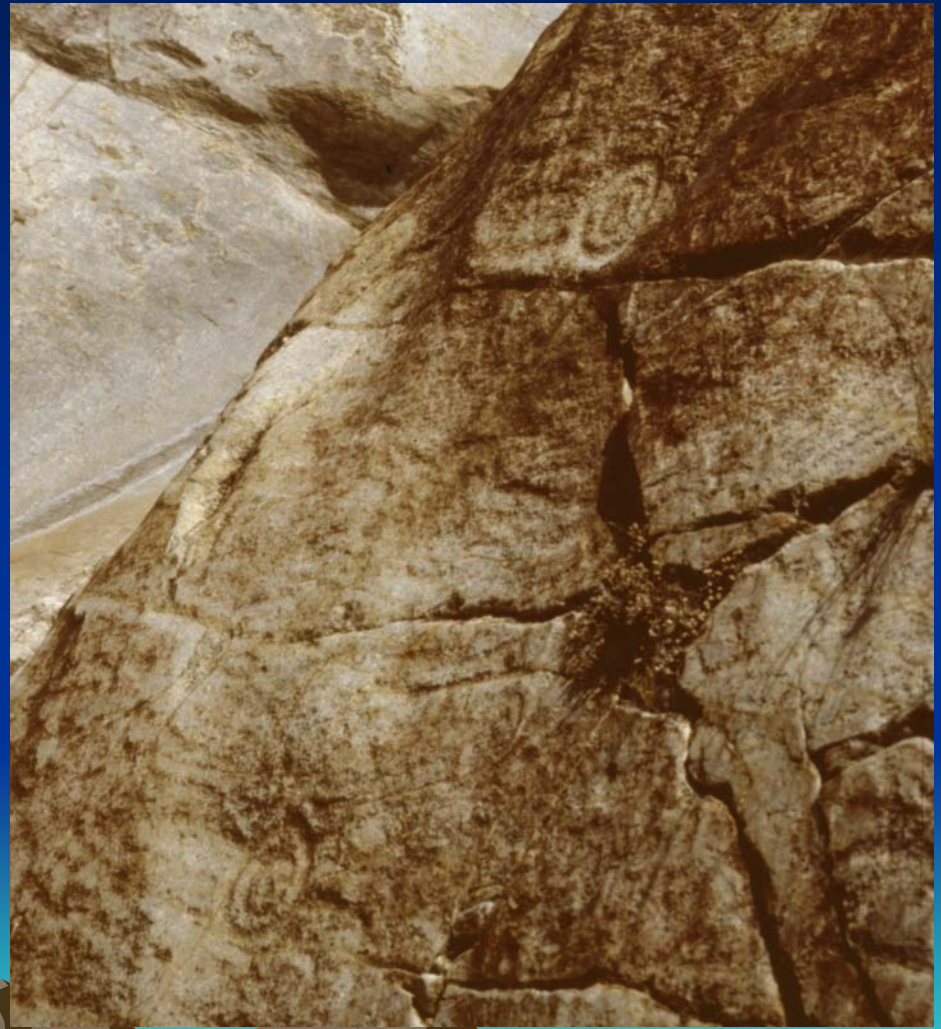
Individual Circles & Circles with dot in the middle



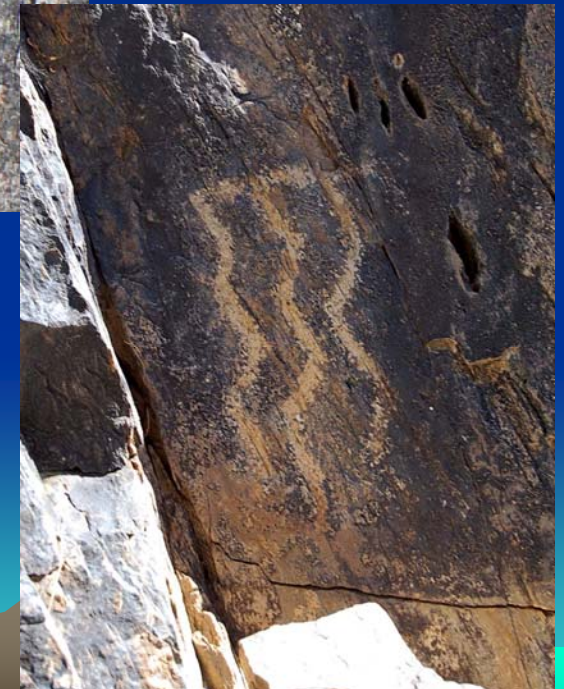
Chained Circles & Circle Clusters



Concentric Circles



Parallel Lines & Parallel Wavy Lines



Rakes & Double Rakes (Centipede)



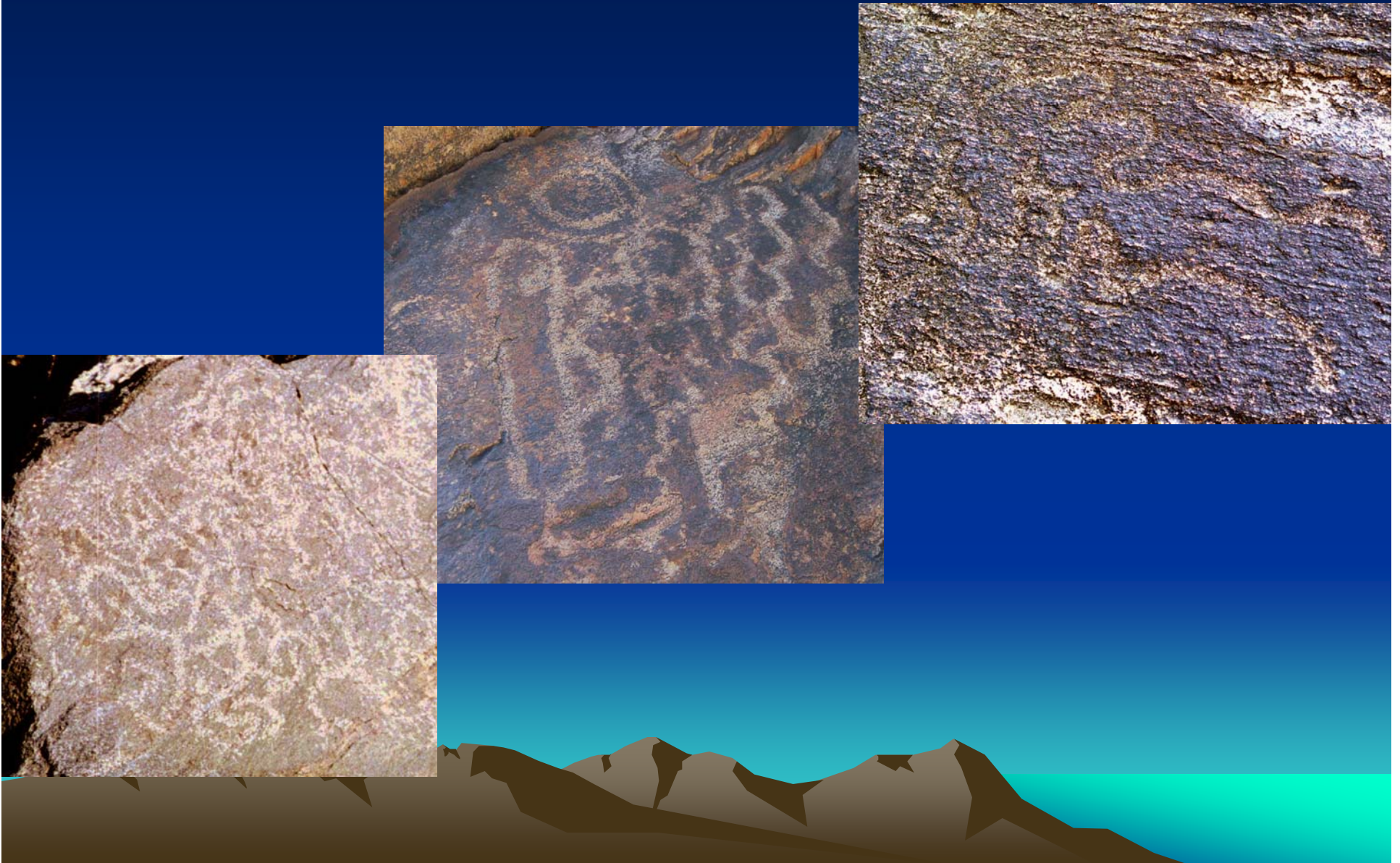
X's and Asterisks



Grids - Crosshatched Lines



Curvilinear Meanders



Snakes



Dots or Rows of Dots



Human Footprint & Human Handprint



Cupules



Hohokam Common Elements/Forms

Diverse elements from both styles

- Abstract/geometric style – spirals, scrolls, bull's-eyes, circles attached together by lines, meandering lines, pipettes
- Representational style – figures of humans (Anthropomorphs) & animals (Zoomorphs)
 - Stick figures, expanded torsos, hourglass
 - Deer, lizards, birds, snakes, lions, antelopes



Hohokam Rock Art in the McDowell Mountains by Element Type



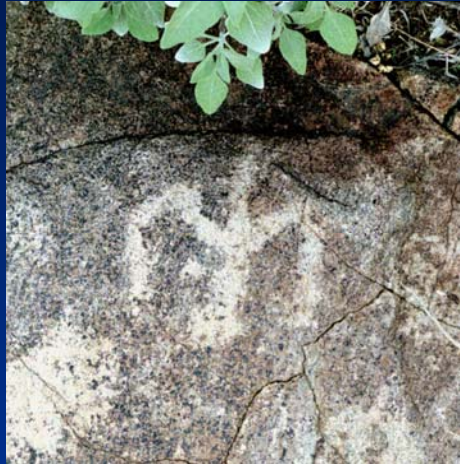
Animals



Lizards



Birds



Insects



Stick Figures



Circles, Bull's Eyes, Scrolls, Mazes



Curvilinear Lines - Meanders



Geometric Designs



Other Elements

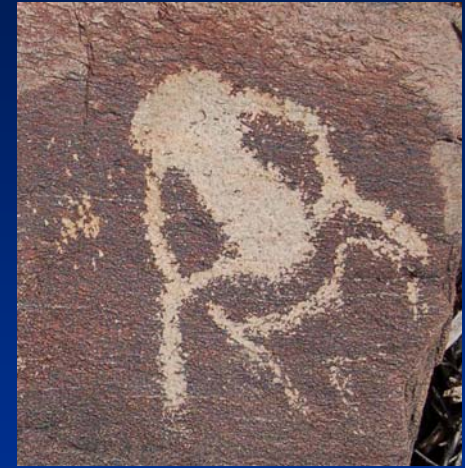


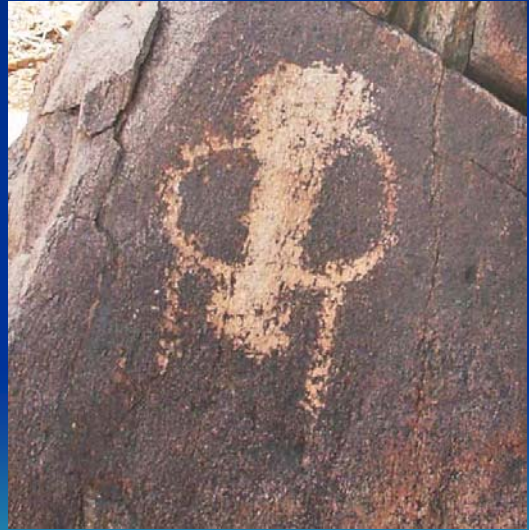
McDowell Mountain Style ARAC sub-style of Hohokam

- Primary figure looks like abstract human figure resembling a beer mug with two curved handles
- Total of 50 primary figures observed – mostly at three larger sites
- Site specific – could date from reoccupation after 1150 AD



Birthing Figure - Mug Men





European Initials in the McDowell Mountains



