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 The Evolution of Visual Information Encoding

International Conference

Engraving Bones in Prehistoric Times: Gripping Aids, Decorations, and Symbols

Organized by the ERC-Project EVINE, the Berlin Museum of Prehistory and Early History, and the UISPP Commission Modified Bone and Shell



May 6th to 8th, 2026

Location: PETRI Berlin, Kleine Gertraudenstraße 8, 10178 Berlin

Audit only - attendance fee is 10 € and must be paid at the entrance in cash.
 Please register by April 30th.

Registration contact: m.hahn@smb.spk-berlin.de



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Conference Program:
www.erc-evine.de/conferences.html



International Conference Engraving Bones in Prehistoric Times: Gripping Aids, Decorations, and Symbols

Berlin, May 6-8, 2026

Location: PETRI Berlin - Gertraudenstraße 8, 10178 Berlin

Wednesday, 6th

14:00-14:30 *Welcome and General Introduction to the conference and its aims (É. David, E. Dutkiewicz, C. Bentz)*

Session 1:

Synthesis of material assemblages, exceptional finds, and inventories

14:30-15:00 Sibylle Wolf, Marian Vanhaeren, Joshua London, Fabian Haack & Nicholas J. Conard

Engraved Identities: Marked Upper Palaeolithic Personal Ornaments from the Swabian Jura

15:00-15:30 Martina Lázníčková-Galetová

Abstract Engravings on Portable Art and Personal Ornaments from Gravettian Site Předmostí I (Moravia, Czech Republic)

15:30-16:00 *Coffee break*

16:00-16:30 Thaís Rabito Pansani, Águeda Vilhena Vialou & Mírian Liza Alves Forancelli Pacheco

Giant Sloth Bone Ornaments from the Last Glacial Maximum in Central Brazil: Implications for Debates about the First Americans

16:30-17:00 Natacha Buc, Alejandro Acosta, Lucía Rombolá & Daniel Loponte

Decorated Bone Tools in the Lower Paraná Wetland (Argentina): Exploring Their Significance in Hunter-Gatherer Contexts from Late Holocene

17:00-17:30 Neemias Santos da Rosa, Lila Geis, Lloyd Courtenay, Alain Queffelec & Francesco d'Errico

The Tai Bone: New Evidence on the Technology, Spatial Organisation, and Possible Function of Its Engravings

17:30 *Reception at PETRI Berlin*

19:00 *Get-together (self-pay, Noumì Mitte: Jägerstraße 35 10117 Berlin)*

09:00-09:30	Selena Vitezović & Bojana Mihailović	<i>Bone Objects with Engravings from the Mesolithic in Eastern Serbia</i>
09:30-10:00	Lasse Lukas P. Herskind & Felix Riede	<i>Mesolithic Memes Reanalysed (MESMERYSE): Computational Approaches to Mesolithic Art in South Scandinavia and Beyond</i>
10:00-10:30	Valeska Becker	<i>Bones, Skin, and Clothes. Motifs on LBK Figurines</i>
10:30-11:00	Heiner Schwarzberg	<i>Talking Pots - Signs on Neolithic and Chalcolithic Figurative Vessels</i>

11:00-11:30 *Coffee break*

Session 2:

Technological approaches to mark-making, technology, and traceology

11:30-12:00	Ana Majkić, Lila Geis & Francesco d'Errico	<i>Formation and Taphonomic Loss of Diagnostic Features in Stone Engravings on Surfaces of Differing Granularity: Middle Paleolithic Incised Objects from Kozja and Mala Cave, Serbia</i>
12:00-12:30	Francesco d'Errico, Alain Queffelec, Lila Geis & Lloyd Courtenay	<i>Tracing Intentionality: Technological Analysis of Early Engravings and the Evolution of Graphic Expression</i>
12:30-13:00	Jeanne Marie Geiling, Yamandú H. Hilbert, Ana B. Marín-Arroyo, Lawrence G. Straus & Manuel R. González-Morales	<i>Beyond Food: Engraved Faunal Remains from the Magdalenian of El Mirón Cave (Cantabria, Spain)</i>

13:00-14:30 *Lunch Break*

14:30-15:00	Natasha T. Singh, Noora Taipale, Shuqin Guo & Ewa Dutkiewicz	<i>Traceological and Experimental Considerations in Working Osseous Material Using Flint Tools</i>
15:00-15:30	Tomasz Płonka, Marcin Diakowski, Grzegorz Ziótkowski, Maja Ducka, Aleksandra Furczyk, Slavko Polak & Krzysztof Stefaniak	<i>The Use of Computed Tomography in Research of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Portable Art</i>

15:30-16:00 *Coffee break*

16:00-16:30	Éva David	<i>Art or Gripping Aids – Any Difference between Engraving to Decorate and to Fasten?</i>
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16:30-17:00 **Discussion: Identification and determination of markings in Prehistory**

17:00-18:00 *Discover Archaeology – From the Find to the Exhibition at PETRI Berlin*

19:00 *Conference Dinner at Rotisserie Weingrün, Gertraudenstraße 10-12, 10178 Berlin*

Session 3:

Approaches to function and possible meaning, and the relations between media and markings

09:00-09:30	Natasha T. Singh & Nicholas J. Conard	<i>Exploring Potential Symbolic and Functional Roles of a Marked Mammoth Rib from the Gravettian of Hohle Fels Cave</i>
09:30-10:00	Claire Lucas	<i>From Fragments of Decorated Weapons: A Reconstruction of Middle Magdalenian Geometric Compositions</i>
10:00-10:30	Robin Andrews & Joshua London	<i>Form AND Function - Engravings on Upper Palaeolithic Smoothers from the Swabian Jura and Eastern France</i>
10:30-11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
11:00-11:30	Christian Gates St-Pierre	<i>Decorated Objects from Iroquoian Populations of North America: Descriptions and Possible Meanings</i>
11:30-12:00	Piers Kelly	<i>The Value of Ethnographic Analogy in the Interpretation of Sequentially Marked Objects</i>
12:00-12:30	Discussion: Terminology	
12:30-14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	

Session 4:

Theoretical and cognitive approaches to graphic expressions

14:00-14:30	Claudio Tennie & Ronald J. Planer	<i>False positive symbol problems and the case of primate art</i>
14:30-15:00	Ivan Colagè	<i>Symbolic Artefacts and the Evolution of the Extended Mind</i>
15:00-15:30	Karenleigh A. Overmann	<i>In Search of Prehistoric Numbers: The Assumptions, Evidence, Methods, and Issues</i>
15:30-16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
16:00-16:30	Ryan Potter & April Nowell	<i>The Co-Evolution of Form and Processing in Paleolithic Geometric Signs: The Role of Cognitive Universals</i>
16:30-17:00	Ewa Dutkiewicz & Christian Bentz	<i>Evolutionary Semiotics: A Synopsis of Engraving Bones and Other Material in Prehistoric Times</i>
17:00-18:00	General Discussion	
19:00	<i>Get-together (self-pay, Restaurant-Café Ephraim's: Spreeufer 1, 10178 Berlin)</i>	

Saturday, 9th, Excursion

10:00-13:00 Visit of the special exhibition „Building community. Göbeklitepe, Taş Tepeler and life 12,000 years ago”, James-Simon-Gallery, and the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Bodestraße 1-3, 10178 Berlin

13:00-14:30 *Lunch break*

14:30 Visit of the Neue Nationalgalerie, Potsdamer Straße 50, 10785 Berlin



Special Exhibition „Building community. Göbeklitepe, Taş Tepeler and life 12,000 years ago” at the James-Simon-Gallery



Hallway of the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte



Brancusi Exhibition 20.03.2026 bis 09.08.2026 at the Neue Nationalgalerie

List of Participants

Andrews, Robin	<i>Working group of Early Prehistory and Quaternary Ecology, Department of Geosciences, Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany</i>
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Bentz, Christian	<i>Department of Language Science and Technology, Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Germany</i>
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