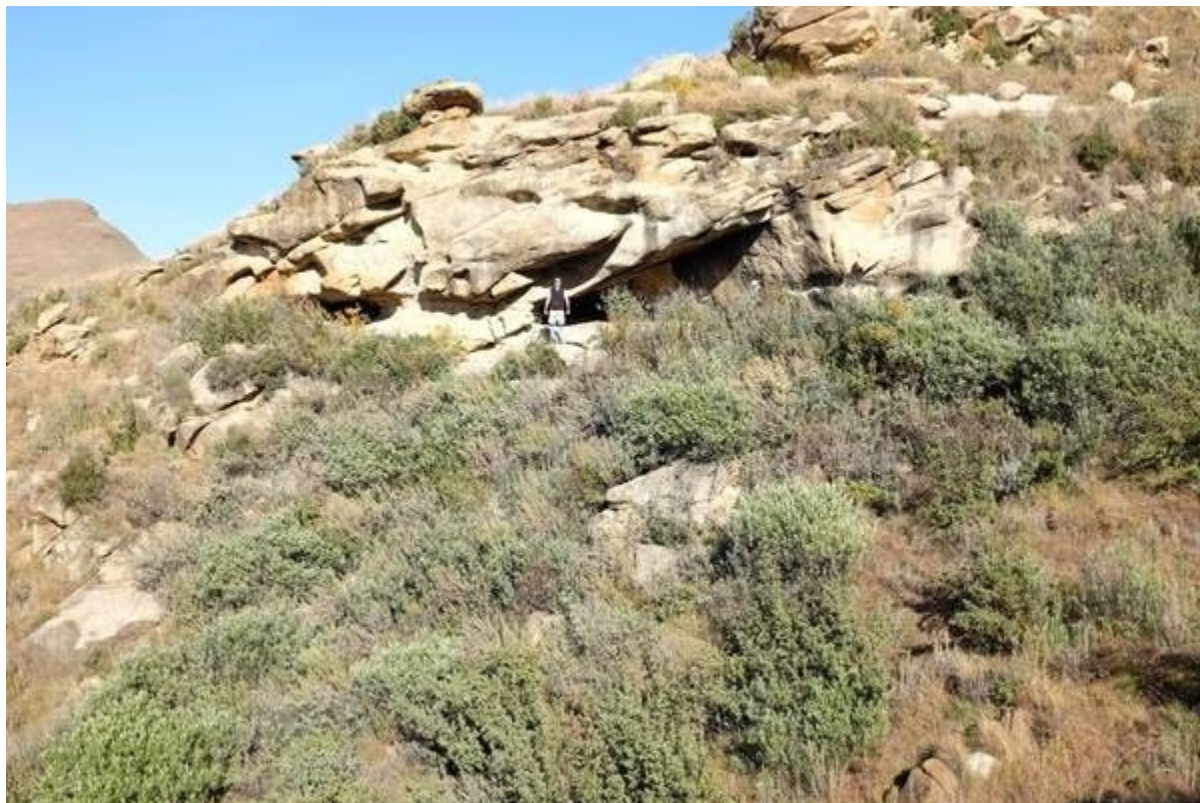


Site Survey report

Name of site: Dargle 1
Site type: Sandstone Rockshelter with rock art
Date surveyed: 18, 19, 22 May 2017
Surveyor: Johan du Preez, Institute of Archaeology, London. Assisted by Dawn Green, Alan Isted, David Smyly
Area: Wartrail area, north Eastern Cape
Map: RSA 3027 DB
GPS: 30.7° S
27.8 ° E
Altitude: 2,021 m
Aspect: Due East
Shelter size (m): Length 12.5; Height 4.7; Depth 6
Environmental damage: Flaking, salts, fading (Paintings are in direct sunlight in the morning), dust
Human damage: Not evident
Surface features: Even surface with some rocks
Rock art: San, brush painted

View of the shelter from the East.



Facing South into the shelter. The paintings in the panel are as high as 2.1 m above the surface.



Description of the Panel

Summary

The painted area (panel) is 3m wide. It stretches from a recess, 0.5 m above the surface, up to 2.1 m above the floor surface. There is a prominent crack running down the centre of the panel.

The panel contains classic shamanistic representations of people in a trance including a row of dancers. Also shown are people running and huntsmen aiming at prey. In another tableau, a man is pointing, in different directions, at two eland walking away from him. This man is being watched by three prone rhebuck. Below this, an eland and a man emerge upside down from the rock face, while two eland have their heads stuck into the same rock-face, almost as if watching this emergence from the other side of the rock. There is a prominent painting, high up and in the centre, of two elongated, white, human-like figures, face to face, interacting (possibly fighting) with each other. There are other enigmatic figures including an extended C-shaped face human-like figure with severe reverse knee articulations and/or additional leg joints. The panel contains at least 32 human or human like-figures and 23 antelope or antelope-like figures. At least 4 to 6 of these antelopes are rhebuck, the remainder most likely eland. There are another 10, indeterminate paint marks on the panel.

Detailed description and photos of pictures.

Photos were taken using natural light. Most of the images were very faded and where necessary, photos were later enhanced using D-stretch.

Figure 1. Section drawing of shelter, showing positions of figures 2-5 on the panel

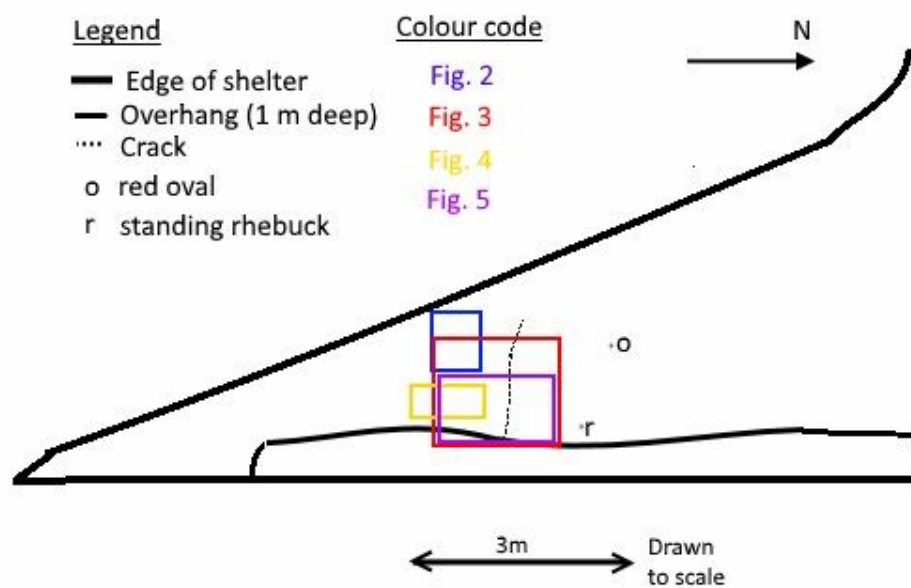
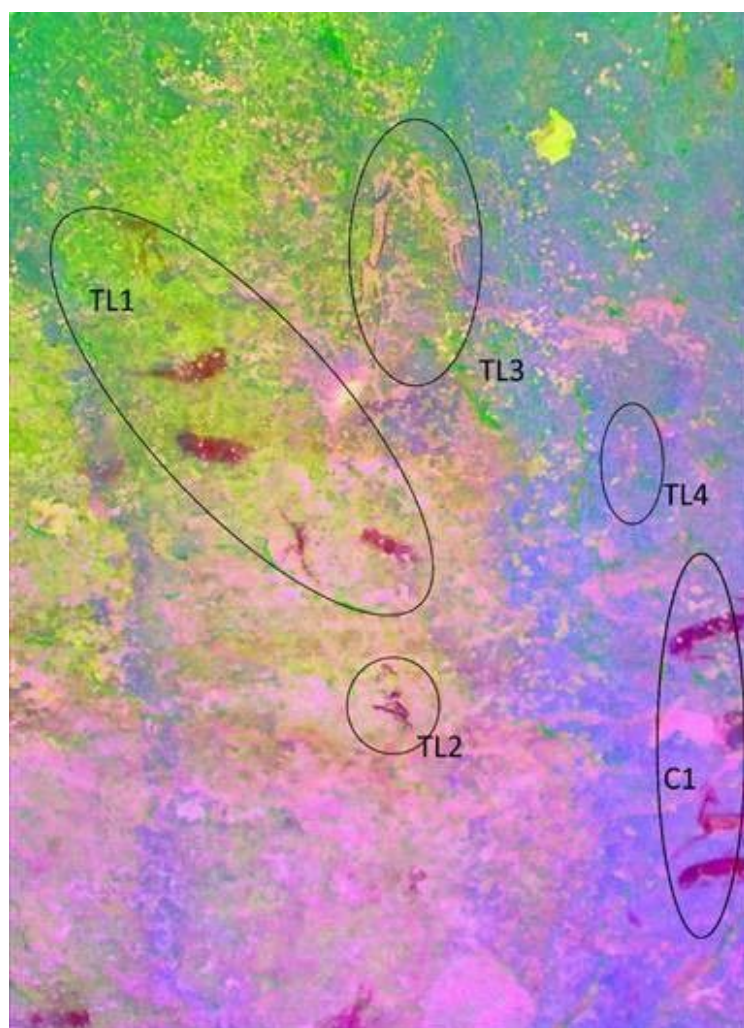


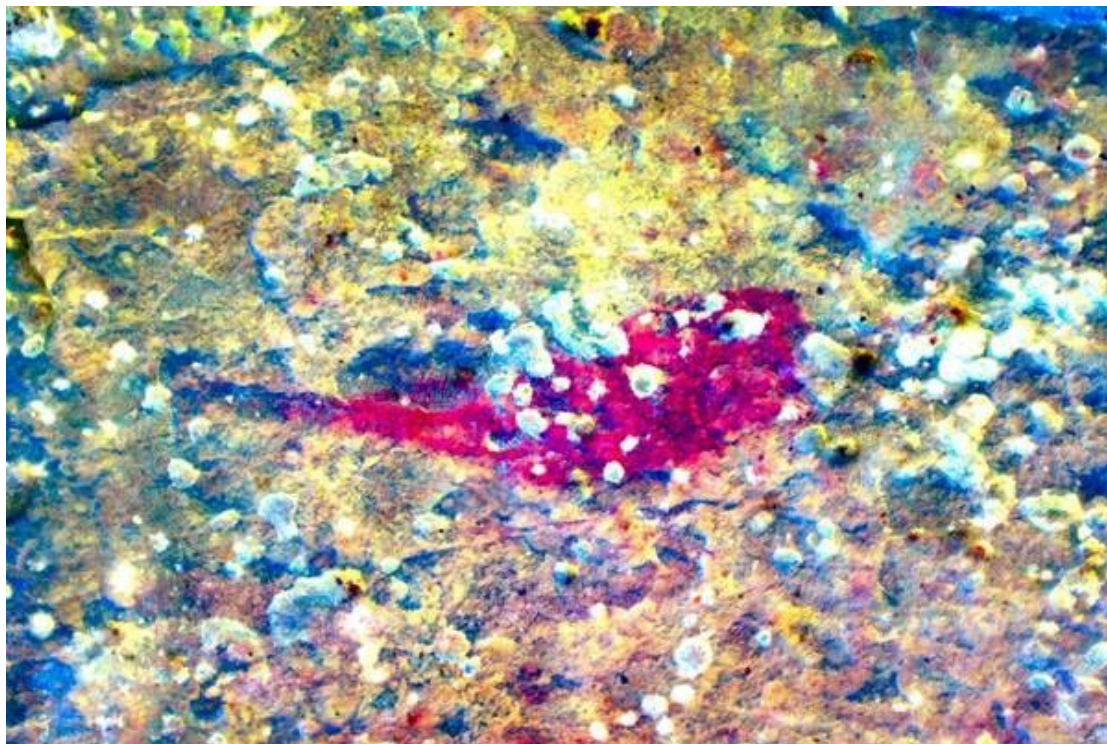
Fig 2. The top left corner of the panel (colour enhanced)



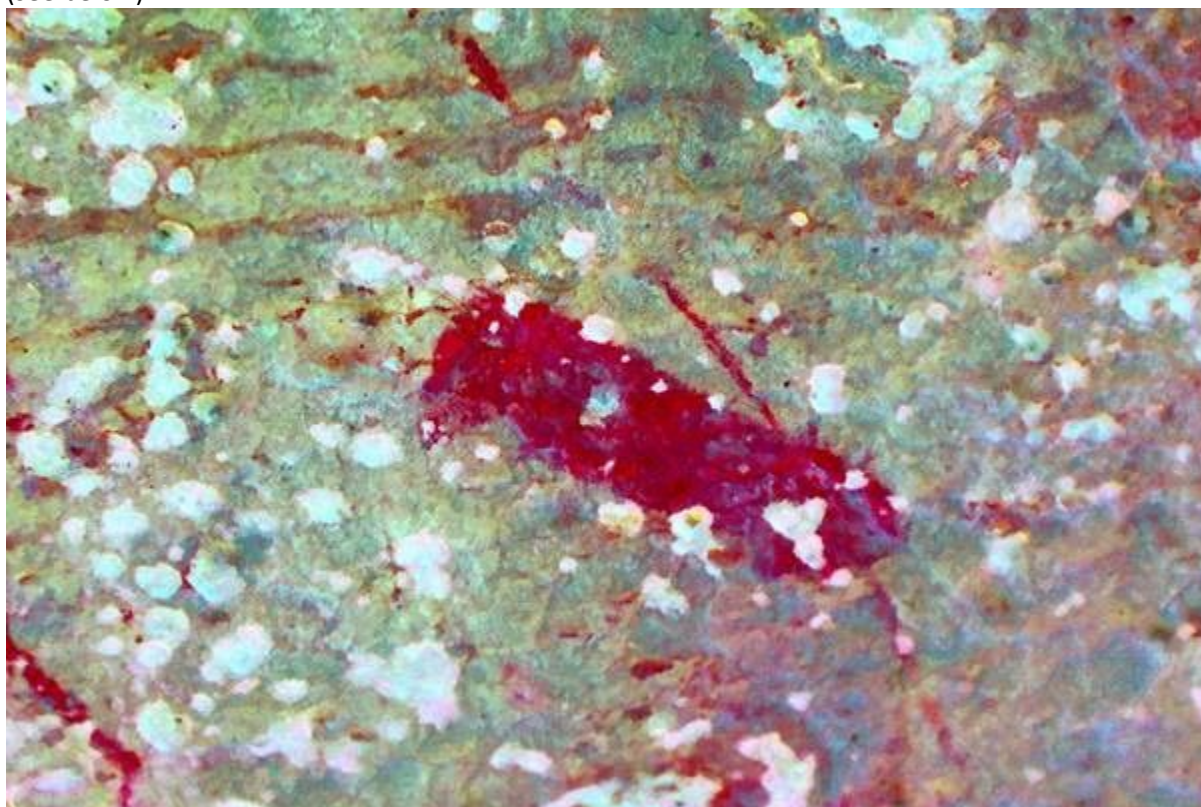
TL1 on figure 1 above consists of five faded monochrome red figures. The first one, 1 m to the left of the crack and 2 m above the surface is a human figure, bent forward, arms bent, holding a stick in each hand (see below). It is a classic drawing of a man in a trance. Note the difference between enhanced and non-enhanced pictures of these faded pictures.



All three the pictures below are image enhanced. Below the bent-over man are two indeterminate red creatures. The bottom one is probably an antelope as a man below with a bow is taking aim at it. This bowman is moving upward along a small crack with his left leg bent forward and his right leg stretched back.



To the right of the bowman is an indeterminate creature with a partially superimposed thin red line (see below).



The following captions all start with the picture number, followed by the picture below the caption.

TL2: Below TL1 is an enigmatic red figure, darker than the figures in TL1. It has an extended C shaped face. It has an extra set of knees articulated the wrong way, almost like an insect's legs.



TL3: This is the highest placed and largest drawing on the panel, achieving a position of prominence. It consists of two attenuated figures, white with red detailing. The right-hand figure is 21 cm tall, probably male, somewhat prognathous, with his arms bent up. He has a red, what looks like a quiver string, across his torso and may be wearing a front apron or alternatively has a large flaccid penis. The right figure is 15 cm tall, significantly more prognathous than the one on the left and with what looks like a kaross. His legs are crossed and his arms are also bent upwards at the elbows. The two figures are face to face with their arms entwined and are interacting with each other, potentially in an aggressive manner.



TL4: Below and to the right of TL3 is a splay legged running figure, with curved knees, white with red detail, probably a man. He is prognathous, with his left arm bent back, carrying a stick. He is running towards the same animal that the bowman is aiming at. His right arm extends up and back, almost as if he is about to throw something at this animal. The style of drawing is very different to the bowman.



Figure 3. The centre and interaction with cracks in the rock face



C1: In the centre, below TL4, is a RWBsP (red, white and black shaded polychrome) eland walking away from the crack towards the left. The eland has a penis sheath, but is relatively slim, with a small dewlap and hump, probably a young male. Below him are two hornless (female) rhebuck lying down and above him, another female rhebuck, also prone. The thin shape of their ears may indicate that they are grey rhebuck. The rhebuck are painted in a similar RWBsP style to the eland. The rhebuck are lying down in alternate directions, but all three are looking in the direction of the crack, at a human figure (C2).





C2: The white, slightly pinkish figure, probably a man, is pointing at the eland with his left arm, but is looking back, with his right arm outstretched the other way towards the crack. This man is painted in a different style and colour to the bowman in TL1, but has the same posture with left knee bent and right leg extended. The outstretched arm is either pointing at the crack or at an antelope on the other side of the crack(C3)



C3: This RWBsP antelope is severely damaged, but most likely an eland. It is moving to the right, away from the crack. Perhaps it has emerged from the crack (as may have the young male C1). Is this why the man is pointing at both? The colouration of C3 is far darker and redder than C1. Below C3 there are what seems to be three almost stick-like white figures, moving the same direction as the eland, bent slightly forward. The middle one may have a fly-whisk.



C4: Immediately below the bottom rhebuck in C1 is a row of 12 white dancing figures. They are dancing towards the crack. Their faces are prognathous. 4 or 5 of them have red lines, suggesting nose blood smeared across their faces, 7 are bent forward, 2 with arms back, 5 with arms bent upwards. The figures are attenuated, all indications of a trance dance. 3 are wearing what seem to be karosses.

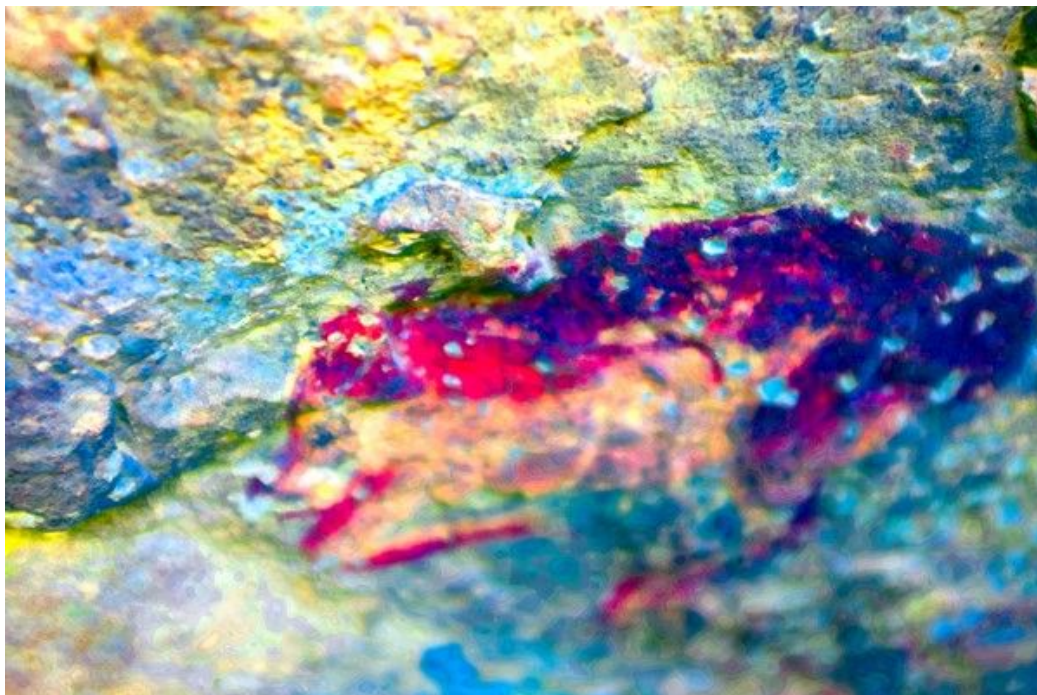




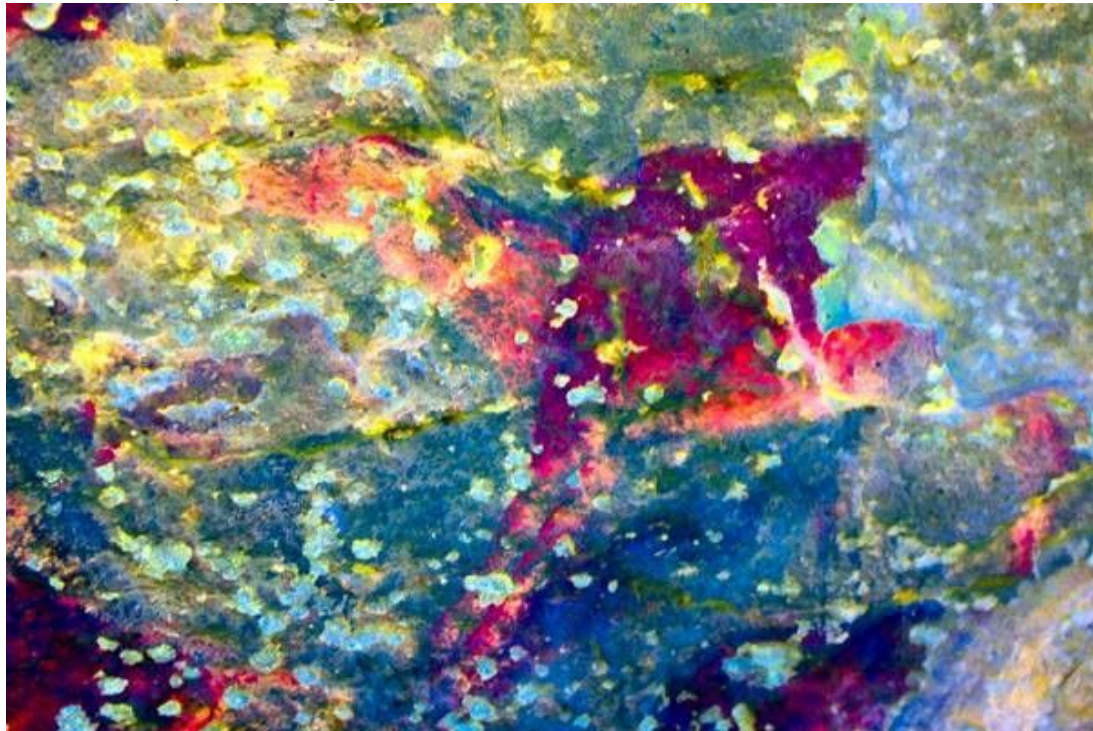
C5: Below the dancers is a downwards facing RWBsP eland. It seems to be emerging from a rock boss, with its hind hoofs still in the rock. The front legs have flaked off, but from what can still be seen it seems they are not hanging down, they are in a perpendicular position relative to the body. Its tail is also down, so no indication that it is dying. Its head is heavily overpainted. This eland is painted in a different style to the young male eland in C1. It has far less white on its legs and the shading outlining its back is dark brown rather than black. Although of a similar size to the young male it may be a female as it has no visible penis sheath and a small hump. The dewlap (or lack of it) is no longer visible.



C6: To the right of the downward facing eland is another RWBsP antelope, lying down, with its neck disappearing into a boss protruding from the rock face. The antelope is drawn in a different style to both eland C1 and C5. It has a larger white underbelly and a darker, blacker coat. Its legs have less white than the eland in C1, but more than C5. It is smaller than the both these eland, but larger than the rhebuck. Its colouration is quite different from the rhebuck. There is no sign of a white neck, all of it is into the rock, but it is drawn similarly to C7(discussed below), which is clearly an eland as the characteristic white neck is visible. C6 is probably a female eland, as it is slender with no hump. The boss in the rock into which she is looking seems to be connected to the boss from which the upside-down eland is emerging. So, looking behind the "rock veil" she may be looking at the downward facing eland emerging from behind the rock.



C7: Behind C6, facing the same direction, but standing, is another female eland (no dewlap). Her head disappears into the boss of the rock, but her white neck is clearly visible. She is similar in size to C6 and her back is the same dark red/black colour. There is less white on the front of her underbelly but the white colouration on her legs and towards the back of her underbelly is similar to C6. Her hindquarters have flaked off. Both C6 and C7 have similar colouring to C3 (the damaged eland that may have emerged from the crack).

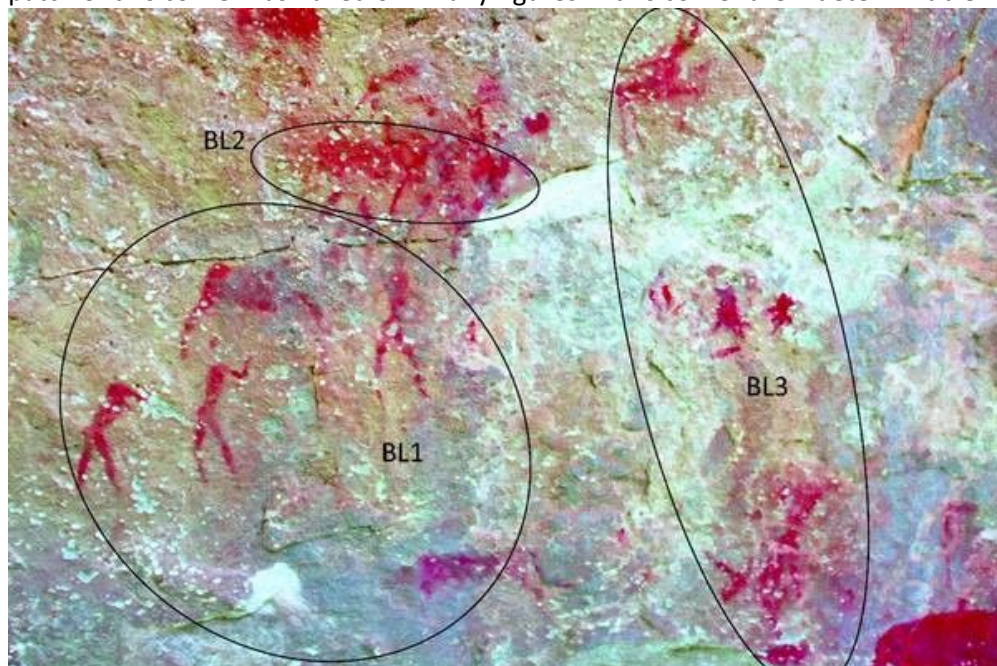


C8: About 40 cm to the right and below this eland is an upside down white human figure emerging, arms outstretched, from a boss/crack in the rock. The figure's face is prognathous, and is painted in a similar style to the trance dancers, but only about 2/3 their height.



Figure 4. The Bottom left corner

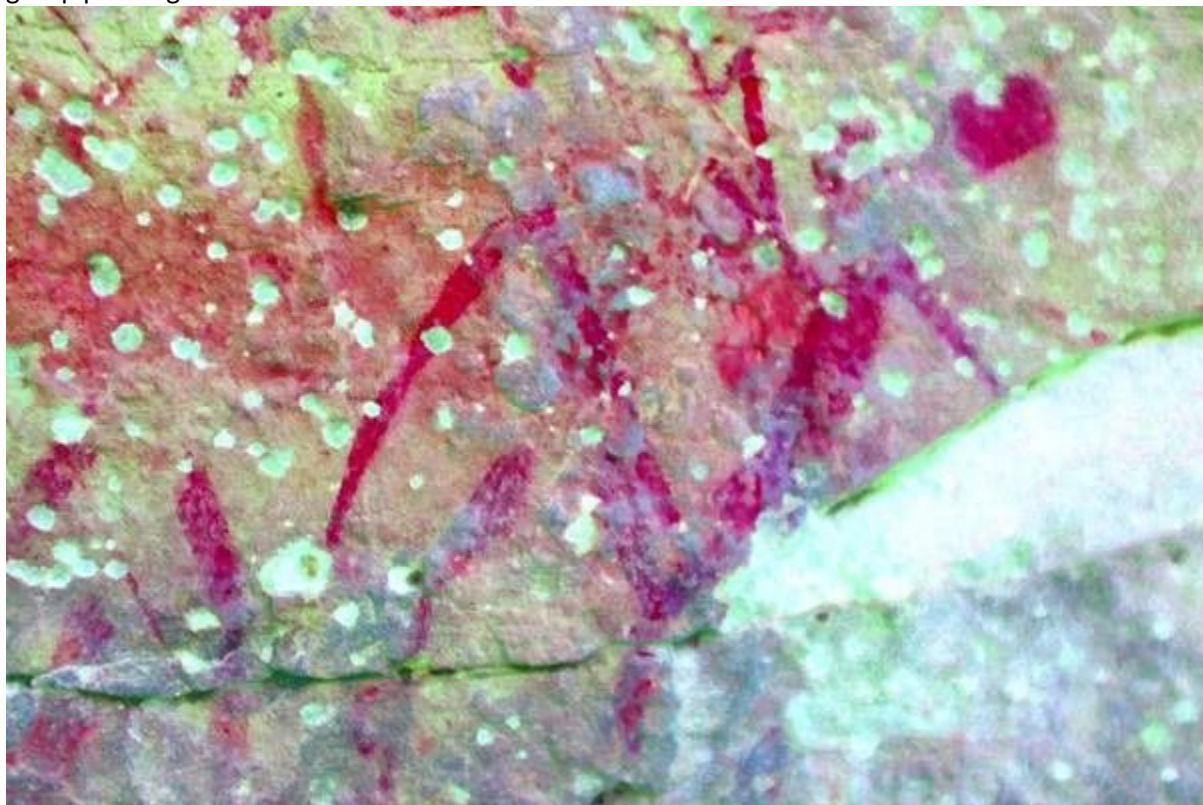
This corner is very faded. Details are only visible on photos through image enhancement. A large patch of this corner has flaked off. Many figures in this corner are indeterminable.



BL1: 1.2 m to the left of the crack and 0.8 m above the ground surface are two red figures, slightly bent, in a trance state with arms forward, forearms bent upwards. The one in front has reverse articulation of the left leg, perhaps suggesting transformation to an animal. Above and to the right is an indeterminate red and black animal. The animal is behind another red human-like figure. All the figures are facing the crack and are painted using the same technique. Below these figures is an indeterminate red animal (See bottom right of BL1 on figure 4 above). Note that what resembles the hindquarter and tail of a feline on this animal is a natural rock feature enhanced by D stretch. It is not a feline.

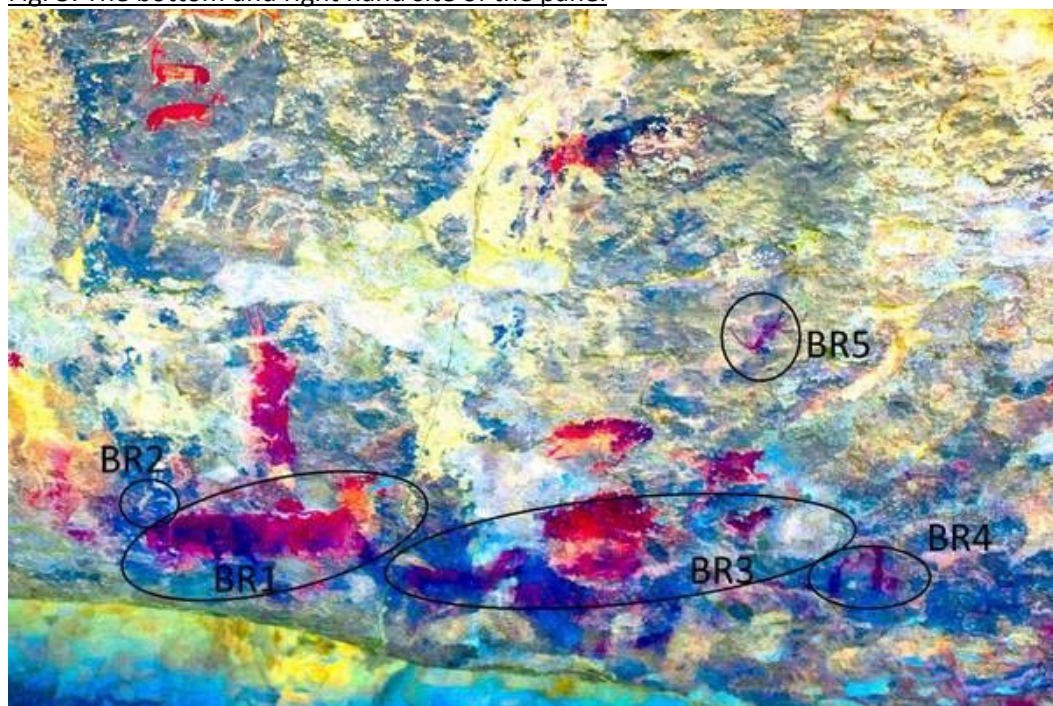


BL2: Above BL1 are two, somewhat crude looking (rough brushed) red figures, painted over a damaged and faded picture. The left-hand figure has a long arm. This may be a more recent, mixed-group painting.



BL3 (not pictured – see figure 4) consists of a patch of red towards the top, 3 indeterminate figures below that and more patches of red paint below that, possibly consisting of 2 or 3 indeterminate figures.

Fig. 5. The bottom and right hand site of the panel

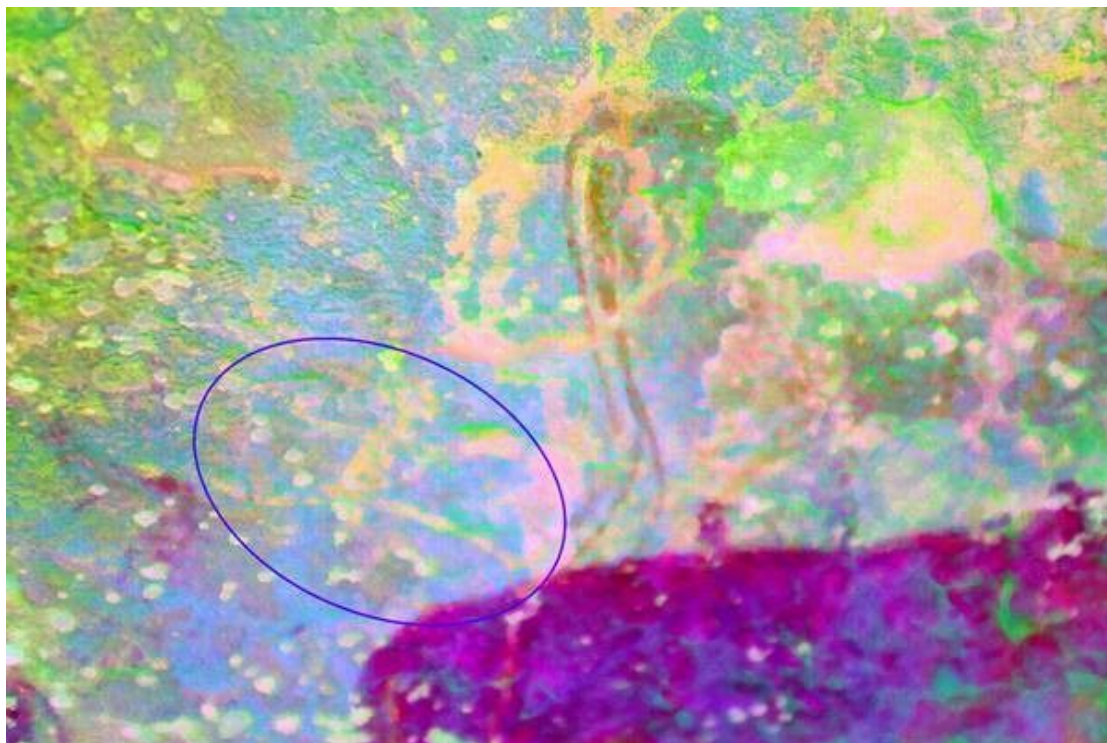


BR1: Below the downward-emerging eland is another standing RWBsP eland. It has been painted over the head of the emerging eland. It is unnaturally elongated, possibly from overpainting. Its head is damaged, but it may be looking backwards. There are 2 or 3 indeterminate red figures painted over and under this eland.



BR2: Immediately above the hindquarters of BR1, is a white, splayed leg running man, with a prominent penis. To the right of this man, coming from above are three curved lines, which may be natural or drawn.





BR3: To the right of BR1, on the other side of the crack, is a red and black heavily overpainted section, faded, covered in dust. The painting is indistinct, but could potentially have been three antelopes angled up or down. To the right and slightly above is a large red area, potentially two overpainted antelope. To the right of this (not pictured) is the remains of a similar red area of which most of the paint had flaked off. The colouration of all these remains and the sizes suggest they were probably 6 or 7 eland.



BR4: To the right of BR 3 are two mono-chromatic red standing figures. They are painted over 3, faint, red figures, one probably a splayed leg running figure.



The white upside down figure emerging from the rock, described earlier (C 8) is slightly to the right and below BR4. Below C8 are two or three small, barely discernible and indeterminate white figures as well as damaged and faded patches of red paint (not pictured).

BR 5: Further up, above the eland with its head in the rock (C7), is a mono-chrome red man, running to the right, bow in right hand and arrows in the left. (image enhanced picture).



Far right of the panel

1.1 m to the right of the crack, 0.7 m above the ground surface, is a faded and damaged red female rhebuck (note her position "r" on figure 1). She is standing, looking backwards, away from the crack and all the other figures on the panel. This rhebuck is not painted in the same style as the three rhebuck lying down. With the naked eye, it seems to have multiple legs (polymelia), but D stretch enhancement shows that this is more likely the legs of two other overpainted antelopes.



20 cm to the right of the rhebuck are faint, indistinct red paint marks (not pictured).

Far above this, 2m above the floor and 1.3 m to the right of the crack, is a 2 cm long, red oval shaped form (see position "o" on figure 1).



Archaeological finds and potential for excavation

A single Basalt discard flake, pictured below, was found near the drip line (for scale, the graph paper is standard 1 cm and 1 mm square). The flake was left in situ.



The floor of the shelter has a 2.5 cm deep dust layer, trampled by animals. The site does not warrant excavating.
