

# THE AMAZING IDEA OF ART BEING A MANIFESTATION OF SURVIVAL

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For: Creativity Bar. October 1, Sydney, Australia, 7pm

<https://uni-sydney.zoom.us/j/89076468326>

Photo: Carrócho by Rosa Ramalho Image kindly provided by the Barcelos Pottery Museum.



# PAULO TIAGO CABEÇA

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- Graduated in Multimedia Visual Arts, Master in Artistic Practices, from the School of Arts of the University of Évora. PhD student and member at CHAIA – Center for the History of Art and Artistic Research and the UNESCO Chair – Intangible Heritage and Traditional Know-how, two research centers of IIFA – Institute for Research and Advanced Training of the University of Évora. PhD Fellowship FCT – HERITAS PD/BD/151132/2021. DOI 10.54499/PD/BD/151132/2021
- Artist, ceramist, caricaturist, and craftsman with more than twenty-five years of career. Plastic work distinguished with numerous awards and author of various artistic projects, some financed with European funds (PRODER) and declared institutionally of cultural and tourist interest respectively by the Ministry of Culture of Portugal and Tourism of Alentejo ERT. ORCID: 0000-0001-6002-2752 tgcabeca@uevora.pt
- <https://aldeiadaterra.wixsite.com/meusite-1>



# THE NEED FOR EXPRESSION

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- It is in artists that the need for expression and creativity is usually most easily identified.
- Creativity, being fundamental also at the basis of artistic production, is in fact, demonstrably, a survival mechanism in various animal species (Kaufman 2016. 4, pp. 29-36).
- Neurobiology proposes understanding the creative mechanism also as one of projection and association of images from the subconscious (Coolidge et al. 2023), for better efficiency in the relationship of the living being with the environment where it tries to survive.
- The Art, or symbolic representation, as a phenomenon of the species *Homo sapiens* and possibly its predecessors, such as that of *Homo neanderthal* (Marquet et al. 2023), *Homo habilis/rudolfensis* or *Homo erectus* (Harrod, 2014), may have its origin in this neurological phenomenon.

- In the photo: piece created by an adult male amateur in a workshop at Aldeia da Terra 2017. Woman and man in bed engaged in sexual intercourse. Photo by the author.





# CERAMIC

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Terracotta - comes from Latin meaning baked earth.

Ceramics - keramiké, «art of making clay pots». From the Greek keramikós, «of clay»

Olaria - Pottery - From the Latin olla-, "pot" + -aria. Clayware factory or place where clay pieces are made.

Cooking that occurs at temperatures from 500°C to 1300°C. (932 to 2372 °F)



# CLAY THERAPEUTIC MATERIAL

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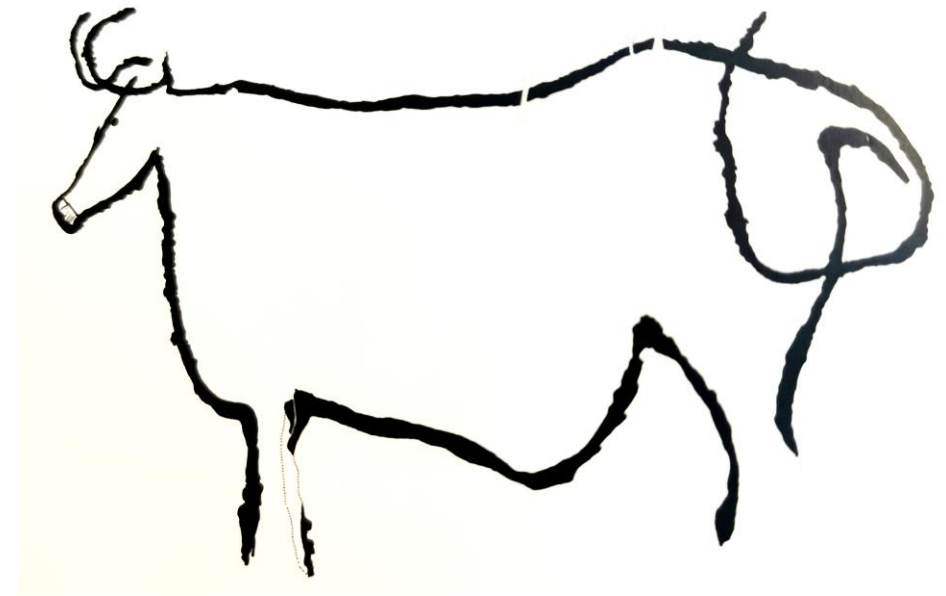
- Clay is used for psychological therapy, as a transitional material.
- In artistic expression, which expresses anxieties and fears, it transports images from the subconscious to the conscious.
- This is an apparently natural neurological mechanism.



# HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN CREATIVITY

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- Creativity is common to many animals.
- Creativity originates, says neurology, in the cerebellum, the primitive brain of all animals.
- Creativity is described as the ability to solve problems and find solutions
- Non-human animals use it to find better ways of survival with the most efficient use of available means.
- Chimpanzees use tools; orcas hunt with complex techniques; wolves have group strategies.
- Art is originated by creativity too.
- The first artistic manifestations, of Paleolithic animals and Venuses, may represent the survival of the individual and the species. They expressed anxieties and fears.
- In the photo: Aurochs. Foz Coa Interpretative Center.





# PALEOLITHIC

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- "In the most primitive periods, when artists were not as skilled as they are today in depicting human faces and gestures, it is all the more moving, so often, to see how they tried to express the feelings they wanted to express." (Gombrich., 2015, p.24).
- The artist's intention to express cannot be in us "a mere matter of intellectual understanding" (Freud. 1951. p.212).
- One of the great bison paintings (22.000 to 13.000 y) in Altamira, Spain, photo from the Museo de Altamira y D. Rodríguez, via Wikimedia Commons





# FIRST FIGURED IN CLAY

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- The Venus of Vestonice. Mixture of bone powder and clay. 111x43mm. Approx: 29,000 to 25,000 BC. Found in the Czech Republic (Czechia). Brno. Still from the Paleolithic period.
- One of the oldest known figures made by humans, in ceramics, possibly made by a woman or child.
- It would thus be approx. 20,000 to 25,000 years older than the oldest pyramid in Egypt, which dates back to approximately 2600 BC.



# SURVIVAL IMAGES

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- Many images of this primitive art represented animals and women.
- They may be seen as two manifestations of survival. The animal that feeds the human being. The woman who gives birth and generates life.
- These two representations are the individual's survival and the survival of the species, something common to all living beings.
- Pictured: Two bison, reliefs in the cave at Le Tuc d'Audoubert, France, ca. 15,000–10,000 BC clay.





# FOLK ART AND CREATIVITY IN CLAY

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- In popular art, we often find expressions of anxieties and fears in works of art.
- Many of these manifestations may be transitional images from the subconscious to the conscious.
- Anthropologists and historians consider popular art to be a continuation of primitive art.
- In the photo "Bicha Faroz" Rosa Ramalho, Barcelos.

# CONCLUSION

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- Clay is a material with weight, density, color, smell, and plasticity.
- Clay is an excellent material for artistic expression because it allows us to use all five senses simultaneously: smell, taste, touch, sight, and hearing.
- As one of the best materials for artistic expression, it is an excellent medium for expressing transitional images, from the subconscious to the conscious.
- Expressing our creativity in clay can be the expression of our deepest feelings, whether anxieties, happiness, fears, or apprehensions.
- That is why the first art in clay, like that of today, can be considered a natural art. It is the subconscious expression of our survival.
- In the photo: Image by the author. Clay Workshop at Aldeia da Terra. 2017.







# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

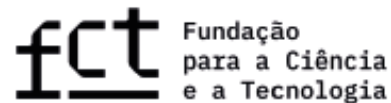
Dr Sue Woolfe.

A Creativity Bar

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