

# Newly Found Prehistoric Paintings in Val Camonica?

It is a well-known fact that a dog found Altamira (1860) and another one found Lascaux (1940) and, third time lucky, it was Paco, a *carne corso*, who assisted me in finding the paintings near *le Sante* on the northern side of the *Re* on Saturday, 18 October 2008 at 11 am. It was terrible weather; after many sunny days the air was cool, the sky completely covered in cloud with prospects of rain, which did not turn into anything worse than a humid fog. And there, there are the paintings! On a precipitous mountain side in the chestnut groves with the roar of the *Re* and worthy of a royal brook so deep below the paintings that one does not see the brook. One sees five paintings on a perpendicular sheet of rock, the plane as if polished, and protected by a pent roof from the worst of storms. One sees two colours, a pink and an almost reddish-brown. And what does one really see? Well, four paintings are hard to make out but the fifth is without doubt a horseman with one hand raised so that five fingers are clearly seen, and with something obscure in his other hand. The horse, 29,7cm from muzzle to tail, 35cm from muzzle to the tip of the tail, 31,5cm from muzzle to the hind hoof and in such a perfect state of preservation that it is almost a miracle! Not quite so well preserved is the horseman, the ravages of time have bereft him of part of his body. His head is perfect, however, 5,7cm wide with a crown of 21-22 beams so that he too seems worthy of a king or a warlord. He is probably not seen anywhere

else in the valley as a painting, but among the more than 300,000 rock carvings he is not impossible to find.

Bjarne Stig Hansen



The horseman with a crown of beams.



In front of the site of rockpaintings near Le Sante.

A horse with a horseman partly exfoliated.

