¶ 1.1



ART 101 B: The First Images

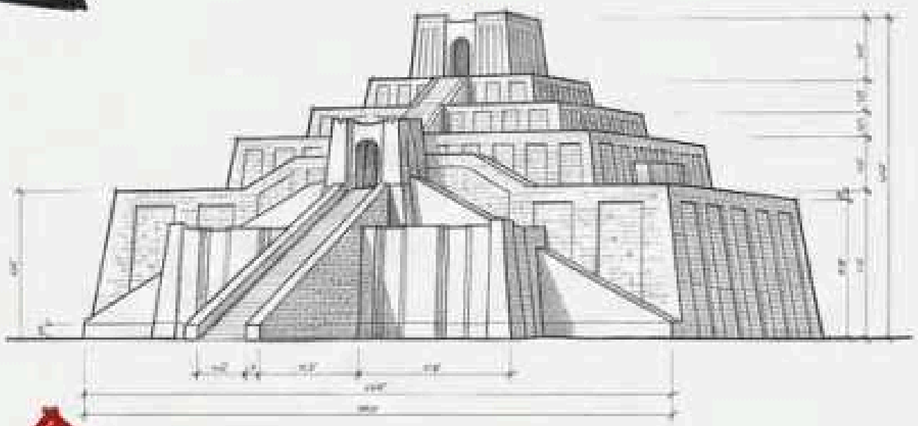
Prehistory and Mesopotamia

¶ 1.2

EARLIEST ART



FIRST CITIES



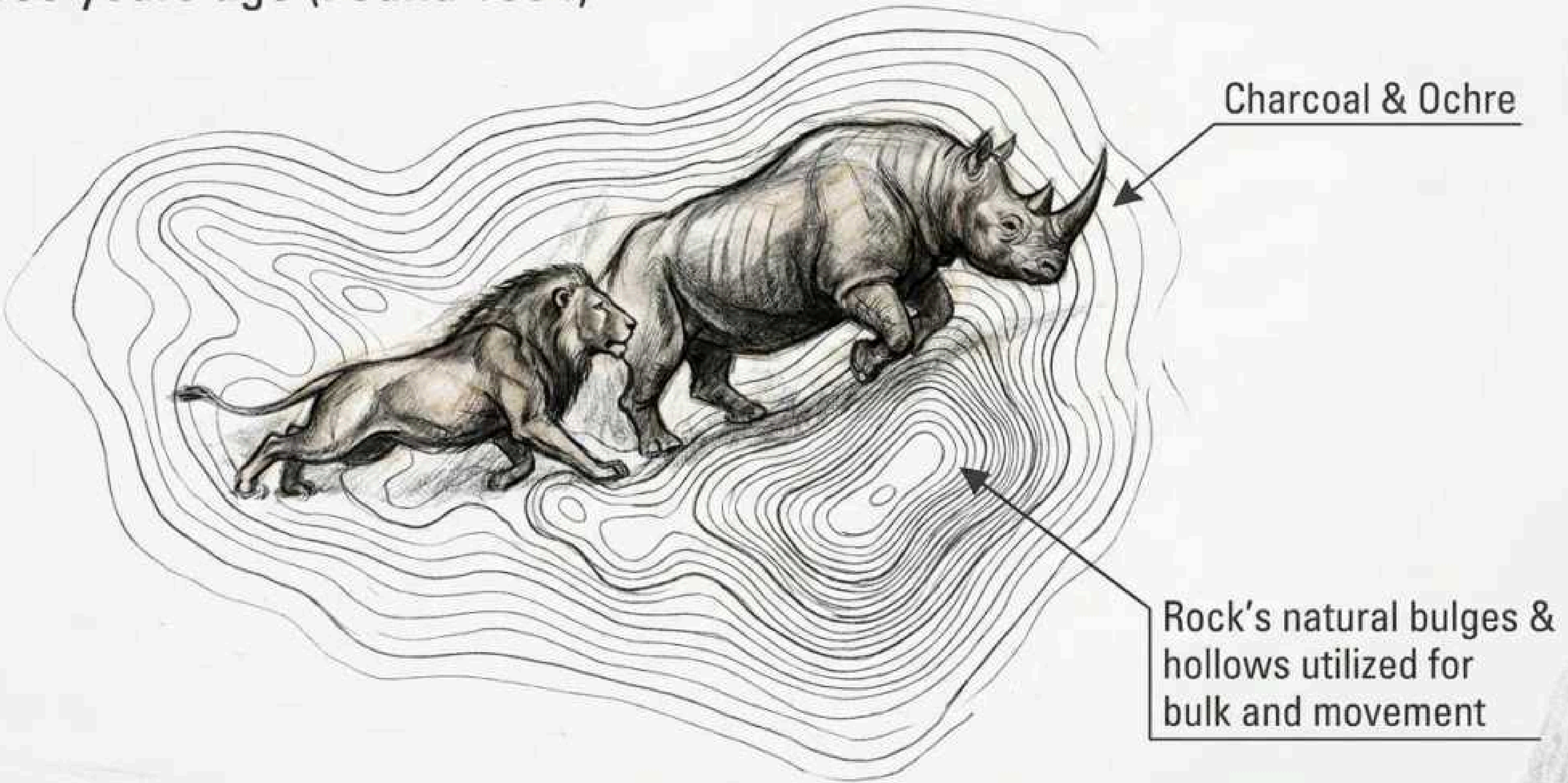
(Sumer to Babylon)

What was this made for?

Chauvet Cave (Southern France)

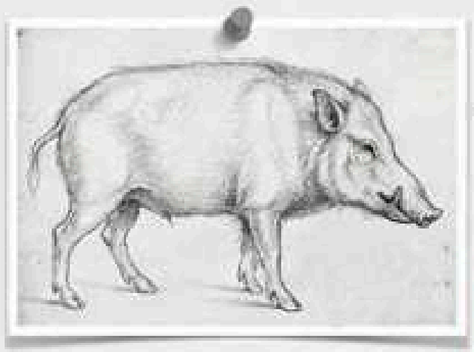
¶ 1.3

~36,000 years ago (Found 1994)



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¶ 1.4



Sulawesi, Indonesia:
>45,000 years ago

Human Breath + Body Heat = Degradation of Art

~~Sulawesi, France:~~
~~>45,000 years ago~~

Lascaux, France:
17,000–20,000 years ago
└ Found 1940 → Closed 1963
(Replica built)

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¶ 1.5

The Science of Age

$$N(t) = N_0 e^{-\lambda t}$$

(Radiocarbon dating applied to Charcoal)

U-Th series notation

(Uranium decay tracked in thin mineral crusts)

The Mystery of Purpose

- [ ] Hunting Magic
- [ ] Ritual
- [ ] Storytelling
- [ ] Trance

Makers left no words = Nobody knows.

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¶ 1.6

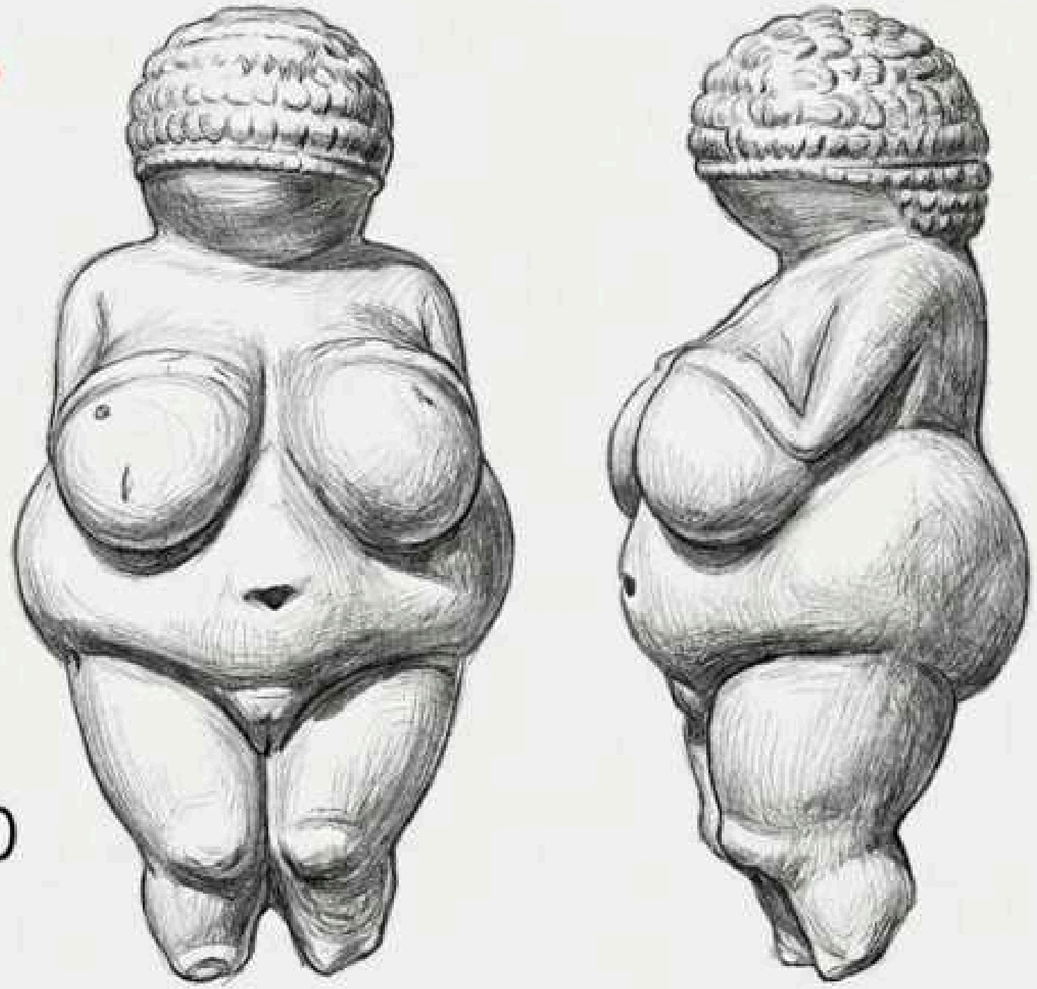
~~VENUS~~ ← Modern & Misleading.

Found: Austria, 1908

Material: Limestone

Height: 11 cm

Age: 25,000–30,000 years old



Fertility

Status

Protection

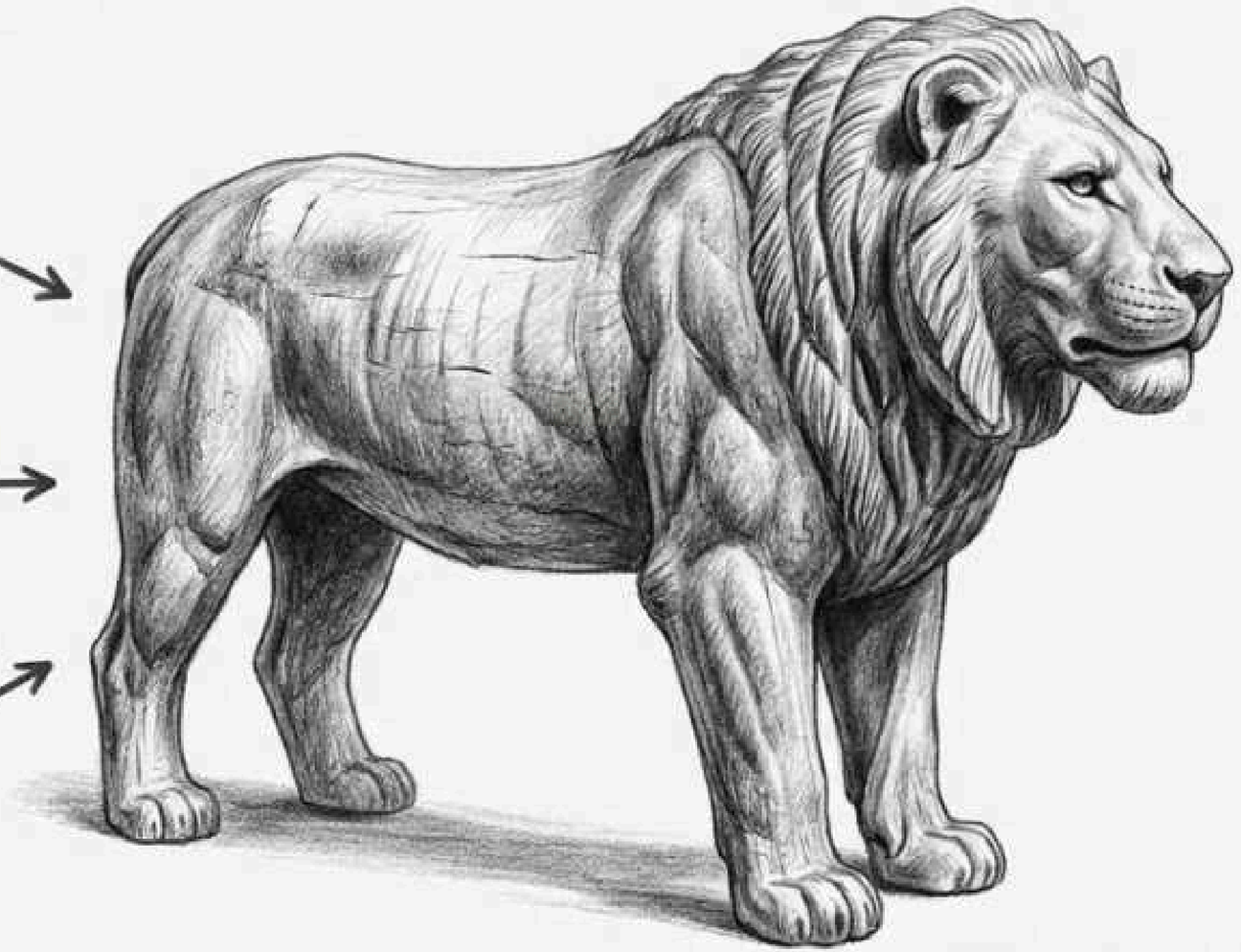
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¶ 1.7

Material:
Mammoth ivory

Height: 31 cm

Age: ~40,000
years old



Manual Skill
(100s of hours of carving) + Abstract Thought → Picturing the Non-Existent

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¶ 1.8

~~Farming → Big Monuments~~ The Old Belief

Monument Building
(9500 BCE)

→ **Farming**
(~12,000 years ago)

The New Reality
(Göbekli Tepe)

Excavation began in 1995, overturning classical assumptions about hunter-gatherers.

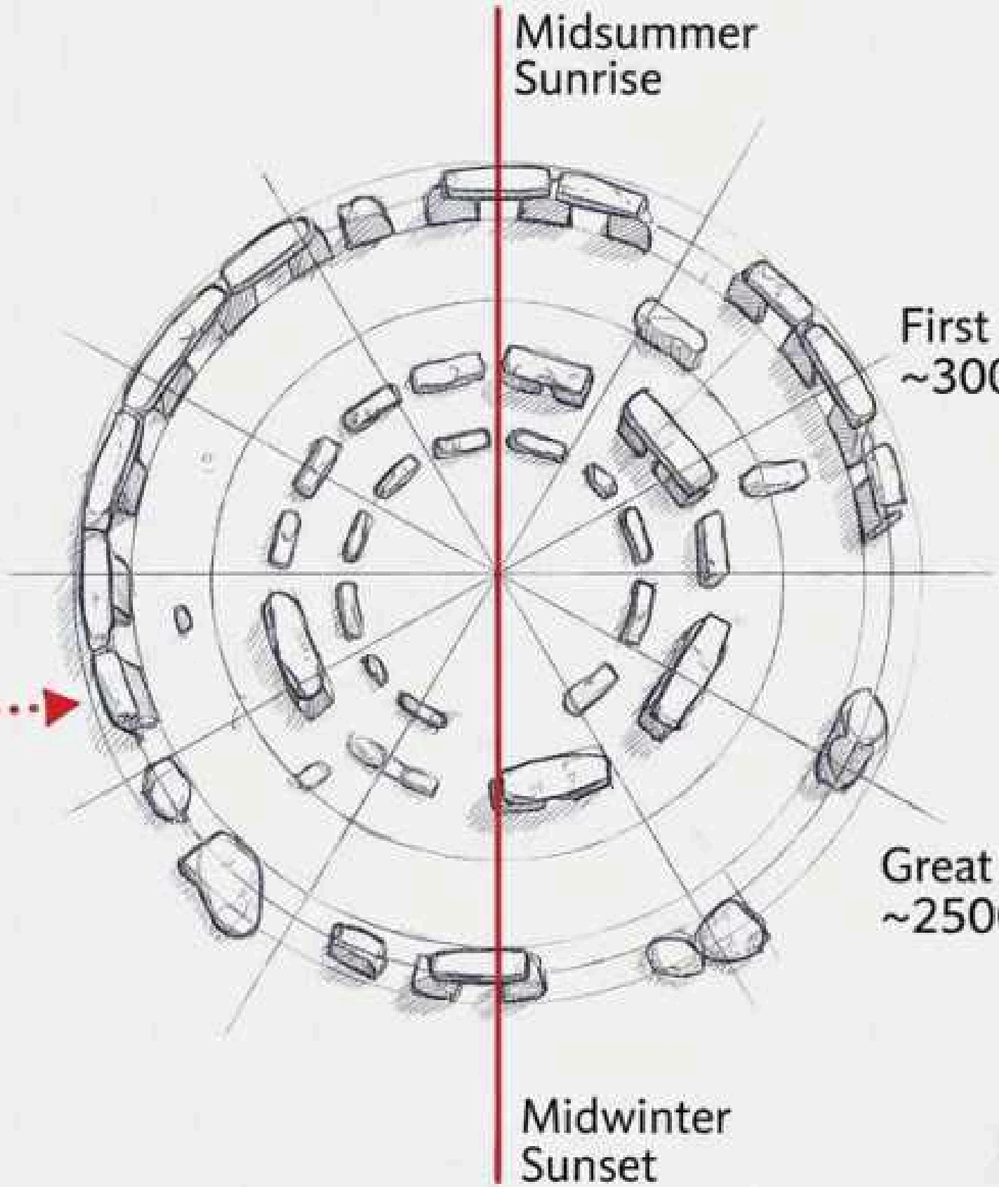


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¶ 1.9



Smaller bluestones
transported ~150 miles.

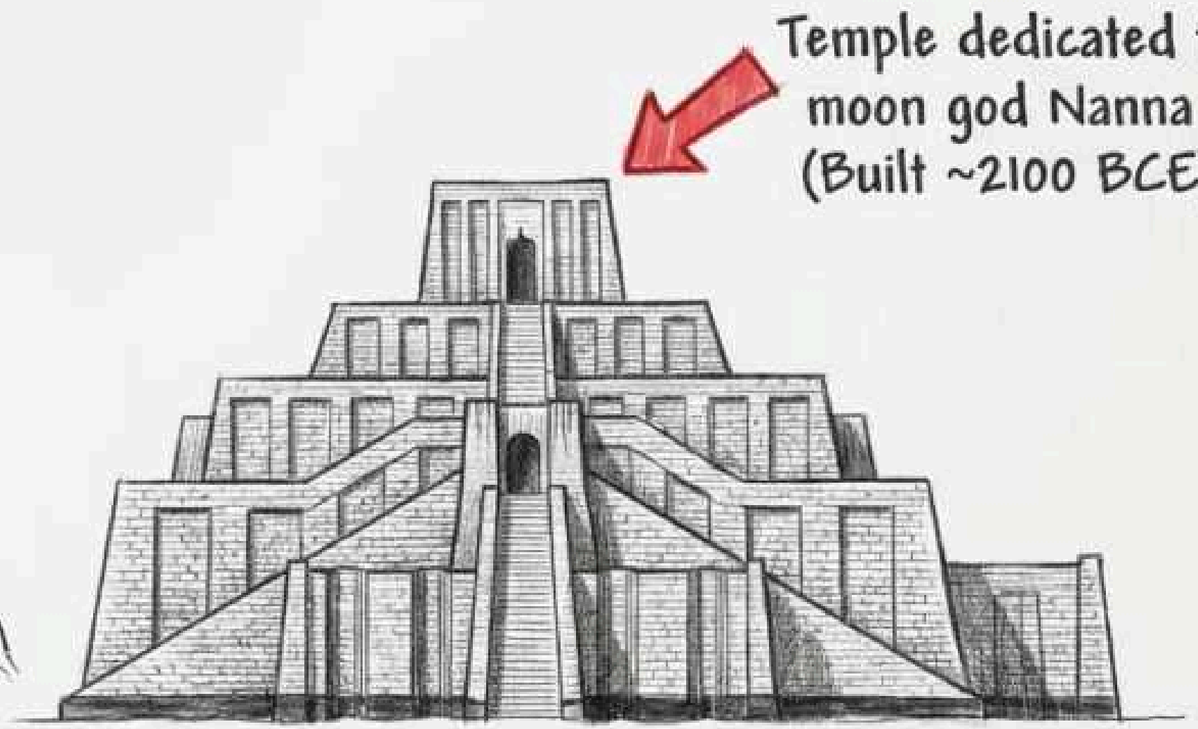


Status:
Exact purpose still debated.

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¶ 1.10





Context Note: These first cities introduced temples, kings, and writing.

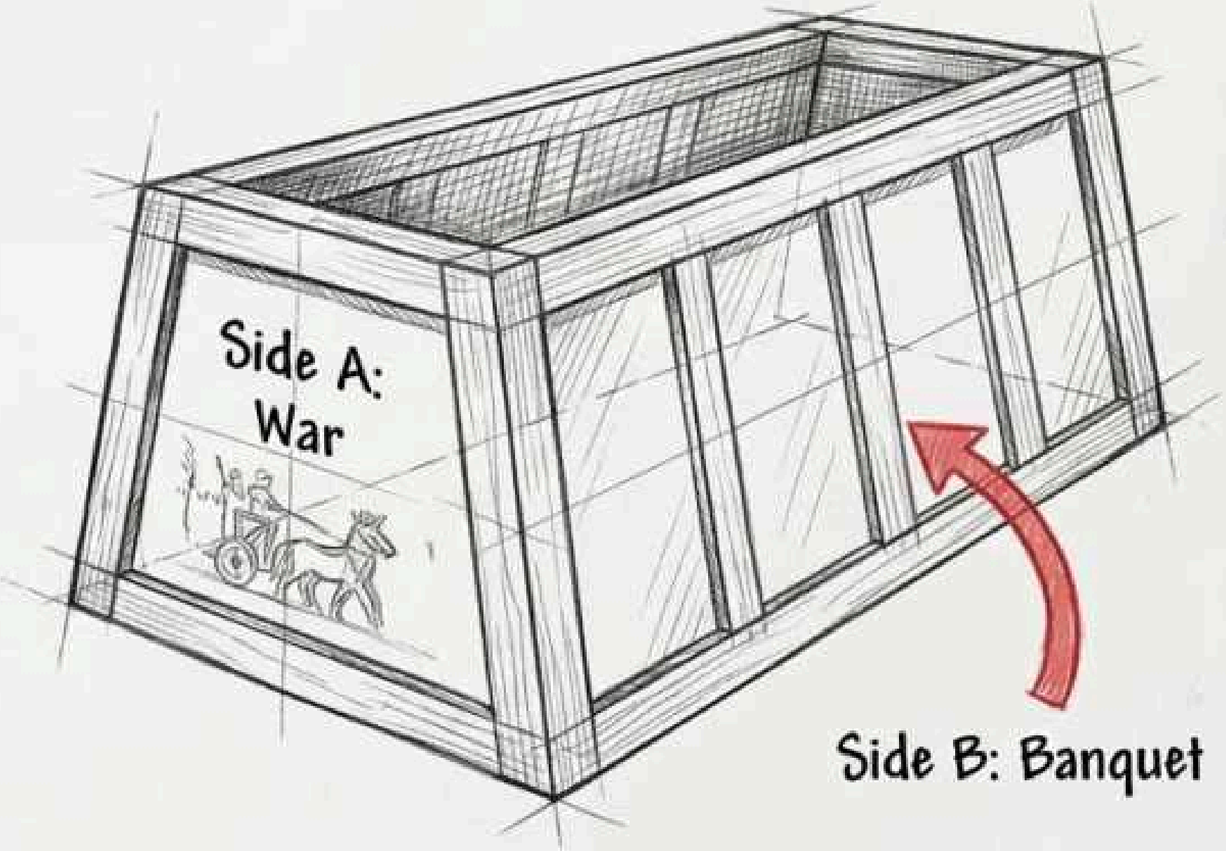
Tell Asmar Worshipper



Standard of Ur

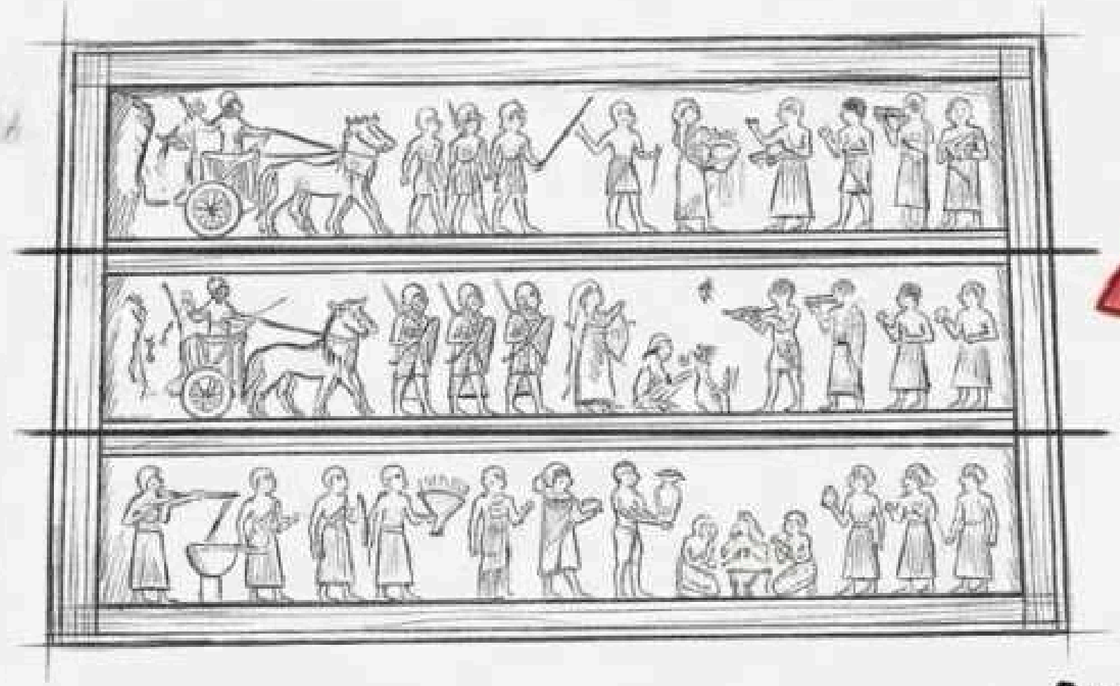
¶ 1.11

Found by Leonard Woolley (1920s royal tomb).
Materials: Shell + Lapis Lazuli.



Visual Syntax: Reading Mesopotamian Art

¶ 1.12

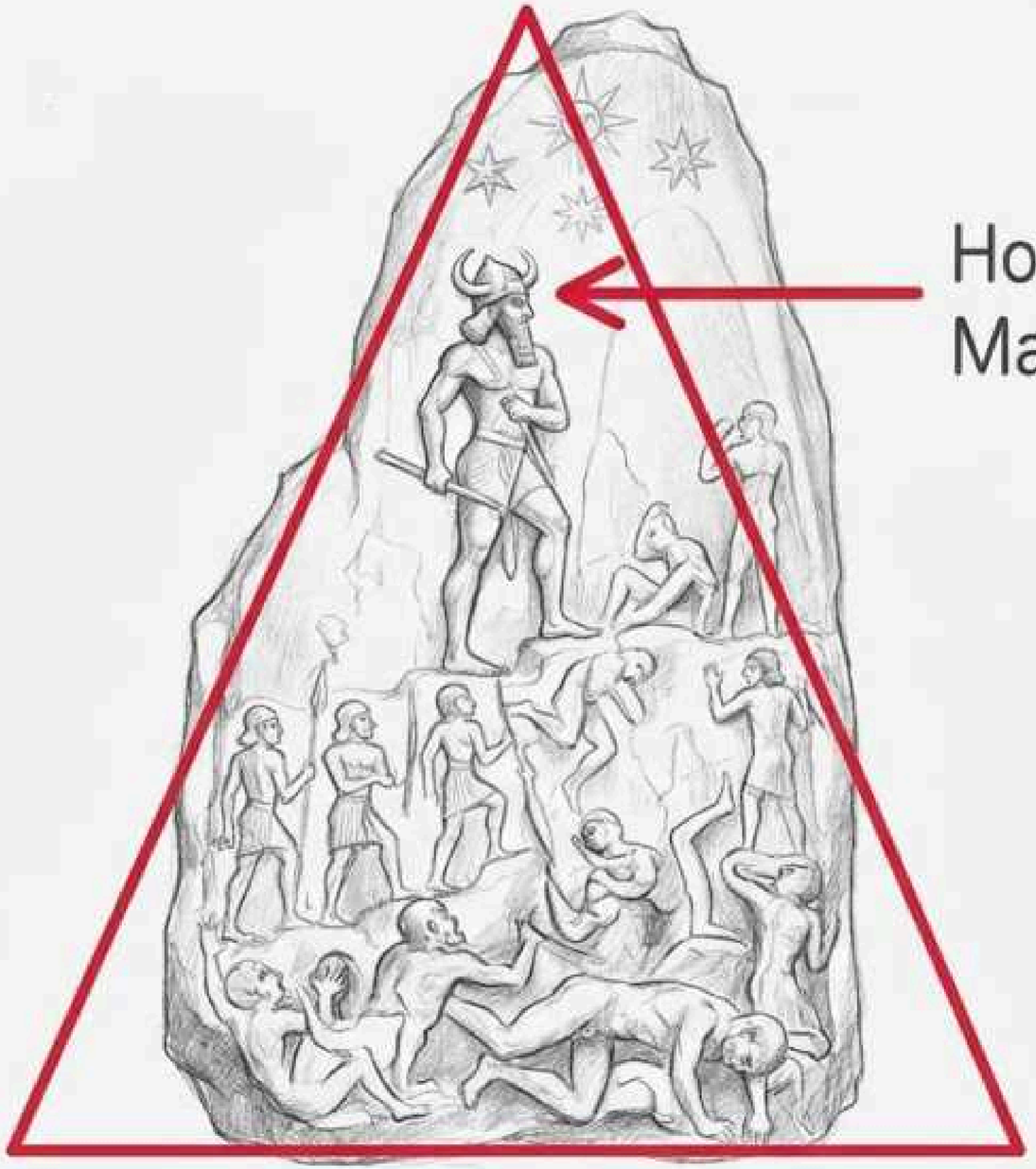


Registers
(Read like lines of text)



Convention continues later in Egypt and the Middle Ages.

¶ 1.13



Horned helmet =
Marker of a God.

Takeaway_

King ≠ Ordinary Ruler

Art = Political message
carved in stone

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¶ 1.14





Height: 2.25 metres



280 laws inscribed.

1754 BCE. Found Susa 1901 → Now in Louvre.

Assyrian rule (900–612 BCE). Palaces guarded by Lamassu at Khorsabad (Palace of Sargon II). Reliefs of Nineveh show lion hunts.

¶ 1.15



Perspective 1: Front View.
Appears to stand still.



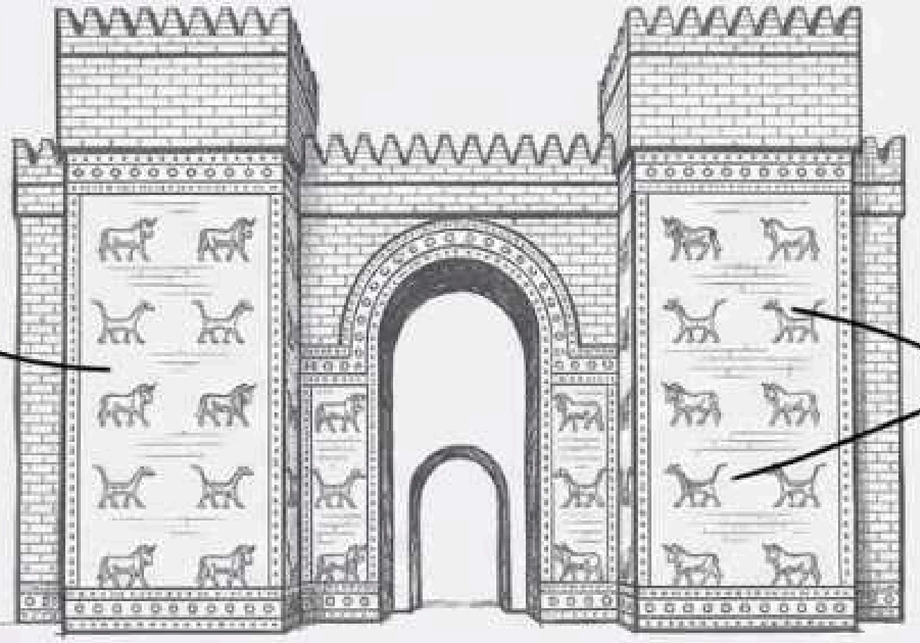
Perspective 2: Side View.
Appears to walk.

Total carved legs = 5.

Result = Optical Engineering.

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¶ 1.16



Babylon
(excavated early 20th century)

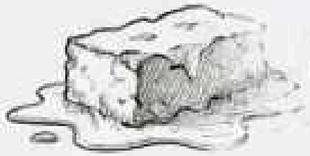
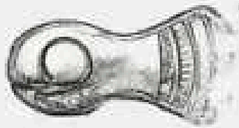
Rebuilt in Berlin

Power and Art travel together.

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The Calculus of Survival

¶ 1.17

Endures	Vanishes
Clay tablets 	Mud brick *(melts in rain)* 
Baked brick 	Gold 
	Wood 

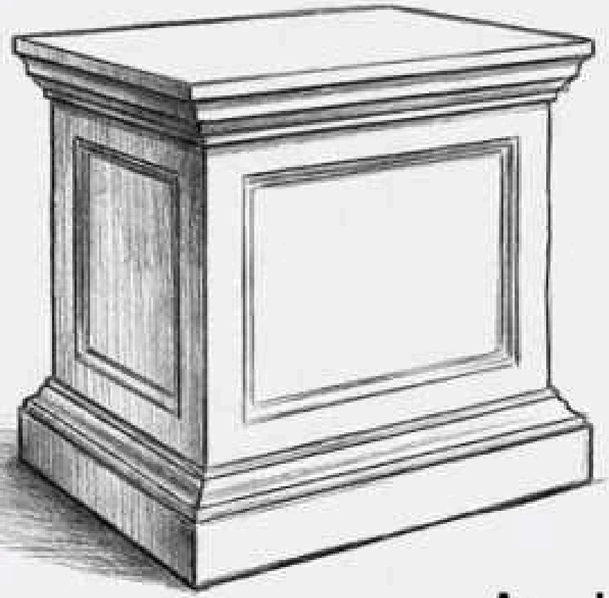


Protecting heritage in war zones = An active requirement of modern archaeology and art history.

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¶ 1.18

Think of a public image today that projects power (statue, coin, poster, photo of a leader). What message does it send?





Analytical Framework:

x = Scale *(Who is the biggest?)*

y = Position *(Who is at the top or center?)*

z = Setting *(What is the context?)*

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¶ 1.19



Lecture 2: Ancient Egypt.

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