

Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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Opening: Thursday, September 22th 2005, 19.00 p.m.

Exhibition: 22.09.2005 – 12.11.2005. Tuesday to Saturdays from 10.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

In the XIX Century, Charles R. Darwin's theory on the origin and evolution of species called into question the biblical narration, thus opening the debate on the origin of man. In the same century, in 1848, the first fosile human remainings were found in Gibraltar. In 1856, Fuhlrott, a German naturalist, found some other remainings in the Neander Valley. He ascribed them to an intermediate being between apes and man. Huxley evinced that the craniums found in these two places belonged to the same lost human race. Prehistory and paleoanthropology were then born. With them, the need to close up the human evolutionary tree arose.

Recently, a team of French and Chadian scientists found a nearly complete cranium, together with two fragments of a mandible, and three teeth. They are thought to belong to a male individual of a new hominid species, that has been called Tomai. The recent finding in the region of Toros-Menalla, in the Djourab desert, northern Chad, has overturned the world of anthropology, since this hominid individual is estimated to be between six and seven million years old. It also seems to be the last common ancestor of the chimpanzee and the homo species. In the nearly two centuries elapsed between the first finding and the last discoveries in Chad, a sort of geographical and time map of the origin of our species has been built. We would like to ground our next work upon this succession of dates, species, scientific teams and places.

With this new project, we are proposing a journey along the different theories of human evolution, developed during the XIX, XX and XXI centuries. These theories have placed the origin of man in different geographical areas, depending on the scientific findings given at the time. It's a journey through those sites where the first man was, at some point, placed. It is also a journey through the history of paleoanthropology itself, going through the Neander Valley, the mountains of Atapuerca, the Lake Turkana, the Arago Cave, the Djourab desert, and the Rift Valley. Landscape, socialisation and habitat are aspects linked to the different species during the process of hominisation. These aspects will become a starting point for the theoretical and aesthetical development of our work.

Findings such as the Red Lady of Paviland in Wales, the first *Neanderthalensis* cranium of Gibraltar, the (modern) Homo Sapiens found in Cro-Magnon, the individuals belonging to the Homo Antecessor of Atapuerca, the Homo Heidelbergensis (named after the German city where its first fosile was found in 1908), and the Tautavel Man, found in the Arago Cave, shall be the starting point of the work. They shall become our excuse for producing a catalogue of places marked by different times. These sites were both the habitat of those first individuals, and a space for scientific work, and for the culmination or beginning of new theories on the evolution, issued by the different scientific teams.

With the support of:



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*For further information and/or images contact to galeria@estranydelamota.com.