ARCH OF ART

Start by just looking at this striking cliff. Can you see the arches? The graceful curvature of the rock make it look almost like a stone rainbow. Arch of Art is much more fitting than the old name: Coy Canyon. Now look for the rock art panels. Sixty-one panels are visible from here. How many can you see?

This guide will describe a few of the more interesting panels. Instead of a trail marker number, a panel number will be given for each written description. There will be a picture of each panel discussed along with the panel number. Find the panel number on the cliff drawing and see if you can find the actual panel on the cliff.

PANEL 13- BLANKETS

From this vantage point you can see the widest assortment of blanket designs in Clear Creek Canyon. Note how distinct each of the blanket patterns are. They are called blanket designs because they remind people of the multicolored Navajo blankets. There is no evidence that the Fremont in the Sevier area used or knew about blankets with such intricate designs. Archaeologists prefer to call them pottery designs because there seems to be more of a similarity between these pictographs and the painting usually on the inside of black-on-white bowls. The red and white blanket in Panel 13 is unique. The white color was carved into the surface and the overlying red was then painted on. The coordination of the two procedures to make a blanket took great artistic ability. Since this blanket is both carved and painted, it is a pictoglyph. This is one of seven pictoglyphs in the park and nine in Utah. No other blanket pictoglyph is known to exist.

PANEL 19- INITIATION

In this panel are a number of figures that are meaningful to the Hopi. The Badger Clan symbol is in the lower corner. The line represents the one on the badgers face which in this case extends down his back. The three squares are rooms that show the three levels of initiation and are compared with the three underworlds. The figure below the door between rooms one and two has the hair style that the Hopi males wear as a child. The one between room two and three represents the style that young men wear. The figure laying to the right of the opening of room three is initiated and in the fourth world.
PANEL 22- EMERGENCE
The Fremont again seem to be telling the story about their emergence from the underworld. This one seems to emphasize the parts that birds played in the emergence. As seen in other panels, the wavy line indicates the barrier between the third and fourth worlds. The one figure with bird hands and feet, seems to be sticking his head out of the underworld saying that this is the hole that leads over the sky of the third world into the fourth world. The bird above was drawn with no feet to go anywhere and therefore seems to be there to guard the hole. Traditionally it was the shrike that found the opening in the sky and the eagle that was assigned to guard the hole. Do these birds look like a shrike and eagle? One current researcher claims that they have the characteristics of turkeys.

PANEL 27- A GOOD PLACE TO HUNT
It is rare to have desert bighorn sheep, deer and people, all in the same hunting scene. The size of the sheep and the deer’s antlers seem to indicate that the hunters are ready for the kill. The concentric circles water symbol is possibly useful to the Fremont in identifying the location of this hunting area. The Badger Clan symbol is very prominent in the panel. This one can more easily be identified as a badger than other figures in the park with that meaning.

PANEL 60- YOU TELL US
What are the four people with the circular shaped object in one hand doing? Is it a shield and the people are hunting or trying to defend themselves? Is it a drum and they are making music and dancing? Is it a basket in which they gathered seeds and beat and winnowed them until they were the consistency that they wanted? Whatever the activity was, it must have been important enough to them to want to record it and remember it for a long time.

PANEL 4- A PIONEER BILLBOARD
Since the pioneer’s arrival in the area, they too have left their mark in the canyon. The historical panels throughout the canyon provide an interesting modern history, but many of these panels have destroyed or diminished the beauty of the canyon’s rock art. This serves as a reminder that if future generations are to enjoy Fremont rock art panels, we must protect and preserve them.

COY- LINGERING QUESTIONS
The most common question that people ask after visiting the Arch of Art is “Who in the ___ is Coy?” People seem not to know whether to admire him for the scary places that he got with three different colors of paint or pity him for his insensitivity in writing his name on these priceless rock art panels. The family of a person named Coy (he is still alive) lived in a house that was a few feet east of where the Centennial Cabin is now located from 1920 to 1945.

We hope that you have enjoyed your visit to the Arch of Art.