

The Whopping Great Humanity-Changing Gifts of Microbes Gallery

Chiefs: Jyoti Prakash Tamang, Rachel Armstrong, Maria Letícia Bonatelli, Ken Timmis



Microbially-generated rock varnish served as a canvas for prehistoric art. Tassili n'Ajjer (Algeria) in the Sahara Desert is a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its extensive rock art, including thousands of prehistoric paintings and engravings. Its vast collection of petroglyphs and cave paintings date from around 10,000 BCE to the medieval period. The artwork depicts a wide range of subjects, including scenes of daily life, hunting, dancing, and mythical beings. These petroglyphs offer valuable insights into the prehistoric cultures of the Sahara region and their connection with the surrounding landscape.

Microbes are the great transformers: they interact and transform more than 50% of the elements of the Periodic Table! And of course they interact with us and all other beings on the planet. Some of these interactions, and some of the applications we have been able to create from them, have hugely changed the wellbeing and cultural and developmental trajectory of humanity. ***Let's learn about and marvel at these Whopping Great Gifts of Microbes to Humanity!***