

The Paintings at Lascaux

by Gary Hardaway

By the time they painted walls,
techniques had been perfected.
Essences of bull and bison,

stag and horse, illuminate
the stony underground.
Where are the practices,

the learning curves's
discarded evidence?
What was the impetus

that drove the lost utensils,
explored alternative pigments,
brought the painters

and their tools again and again,
erected scaffolding to reach
the high regions of the cave space?

Though articulate, the images
tell us only what we see
in our contemporary light.

Everything else is silence.

