



Madrone, Rainbow Falls Overlook, Sisters Wilderness Area, near McKenzie Bridge, Oregon

Who Was Rob Devleming?

Petroglyphs, pictographs, arborglyphs, trail registers, graffiti. For as long as humans have possessed self-awareness, we have sought ways to assert our presence, our identity, and our persistence in a world that is, fundamentally, indifferent to us. But our responses to these various forms of self-assertion reveal our changing relationship to the world. Petroglyphs, pictographs, and arborglyphs are revered and protected as windows into the past, when people were (we in the 21st century think) more a part of nature. Now we stand further apart from nature, and, while it appears ironically at times in art galleries and museums, graffiti is generally reviled.

It is as unknowable why an ancient graffitista painted three figures holding hands on a rock approaching Lower Calf Creek Falls as why Rob Devleming sharpied his name on a random Madrone. Maybe it is to do with all that falling water. But...

I think they both just needed to say *I am*.

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Pictographs, Lower Calf Creek Falls trail, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah