



Circa 1492

Art in the Age of Exploration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Deborah Ziska
Liz Kimball
(202) 842-6353

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

TO PRODUCE FILM AS PART OF

CIRCA 1492: ART IN THE AGE OF EXPLORATION

National Gallery of Art
Washington
October 12, 1991-
January 12, 1992

4th Street and Constitution
Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20565
(202) 842-6353

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 9, 1990 -- Beyond the Vanishing Point: Circa 1492, a thirty-minute film on the discovery of perspective and concepts of pictorial space at the time of the Renaissance, will be produced by the National Gallery of Art as part of the exhibition Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration. The film will take the viewer on a global journey, through the exploration and discovery of the representation of space in fifteenth century Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Production of the 35 mm widescreen film will involve the use of advanced special effects, such as multi-layer backlit computer animation and new optical printing techniques.

The film is made possible by the joint support of Canon U.S.A., Inc. and Canon, Inc.

-more-

*The exhibition is made possible by
Ameritech,
The Nomura Securities Co., Ltd., and
Republic National Bank of New York*

film . . . page two

Award-winning filmmaker Rick Harper will produce the film in association with the National Gallery. The film will be presented at the Gallery on a regular basis for the duration of the exhibition Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration, October 12, 1991 through January 12, 1992.

"Beyond the Vanishing Point is a cinematic exploration of the birth of perspective, focusing on space and man's relationship to it, which was one of the major achievements of the fifteenth century and a source for our understanding of today's world," said National Gallery director J. Carter Brown. "We are delighted that Canon will join the National Gallery in partnership for this fascinating film odyssey, which offers all of us a better insight to the beginnings of today's global village."

The film will recreate fifteenth-century artist/architect Filippo Brunelleschi's perspective view of the Baptistry in Florence, Italy, which was, in its own right, an experiment for the eye, involving the first-known use of linear perspective. Brunelleschi's discovery of perspective had an immediate and major impact on art, design, and architecture. The film will utilize special effects and elements of linear design to underscore the importance of Brunelleschi's work for the art of the Renaissance.

film . . . page three

Filmed on location, Beyond the Vanishing Point will explore the spatial implications of such urban designs as Leonardo da Vinci's map of the Italian city of Imola, the magnificent painting of an Ideal City in Urbino, Jacopo de' Barbari's bird's-eye view of Venice, the plan of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, the Silver Pavilion and its gardens in Kyoto, and the spectacular Forbidden City in Beijing. Works of art depicting Renaissance views of the world will be overlaid with images created through the technical advances of the "space age", allowing the viewer to look at the past and present simultaneously. Further exploring the concept of the global view, the film will juxtapose space shuttle and satellite photographs with the great maps and geographical documents of the Renaissance. The film will provide a broad context in which to view and understand better the great works of art and architecture created during this amazingly fertile period in world history.

In the fall of 1991 the Gallery plans to broadcast the film nationwide through the Public Broadcasting stations. The film will be available in eight languages--Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish--for international distribution on videocassette and for broadcast in Western Europe, Asia, and the Americas.