

Visual Cartography

Written by Oscar Guzmán

For over 35,000 years, we have been representing what we see and imagine, what terrifies us and what we desire. In dark caves, ancestral shamans used orthogonal projections to cast the canonical profiles of terrifying beasts and undecipherable geometries onto sacred stones and rocks. Like a powerful conceptual telephoto, the shamans compressed distance, creating the world's first visual cartographies.



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The universality of this representational form and its extraordinary perseverance through time confirms that, in the grand spectrum of human history, visual cartography based on orthogonal profiles and mysterious marks characterizes us as a Graphic Species.



New visual strategies arose after the era of simple, planar representations. In Asia, axonometric perspective developed, while in Persia, and during the splendor of the Byzantine era, exotic projection methods were used. It was not until the Renaissance, 600 years ago, that linear perspective was used – thanks to the work of Alhazein, Roger Bacon and Brunelleschi.

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Renaissance artists, and their successors, came to use the camera oscura and camera lucida extensively as tools to create visual cartographies.



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Original perspective

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© Wikia Commons - Photo of the interior of the National Museum of the United States of America, showing the checkered floor and the colorful murals.



© Wikia Commons - Photo of an airport tarmac at night, showing a large aircraft being serviced by ground crew and equipment.

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El mundo ofrece una gran variedad de lugares interesantes. Algunos de ellos son de gran importancia y otros simplemente curiosos. Este artículo te presentamos algunos de ellos.



Si quieres saber más sobre el mundo de la cartografía, te recomendamos que visites el artículo que acabamos de publicar en el blog de los mapas, que puedes encontrar en el siguiente enlace: <http://www.mapas247.com/magazine/articles/cartografia/cartografia.html>. ¡Gracias por leerlo!