

Anamorphic Projection



Anamorphic art is severely distorted until you view it in a cylindrical mirror. This card came with a silvered mylar sheet to be wrapped into a cylinder and placed on the circle. There you could see a nice round globe. It looked good, but wait—how can you see the whole earth by viewing the globe from one vantage point?

The virtual image is a trick globe where the whole surface has been mapped conformally onto one hemisphere. I got the idea from E. N. Gilbert, who kept a large globe with two whole-earth hemispheres in his office. He'd spin the globe and ask people if they noticed anything unusual about it. Because conformal mapping is kind to shapes, it sometimes took several spins before a visitor cottoned onto the trick.