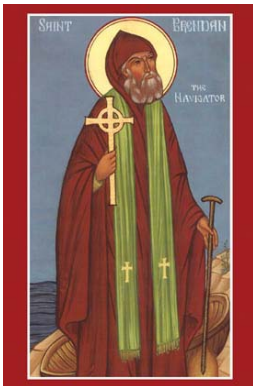


MARITIME MYSTERIES

“Who discovered America before Columbus”

A dual exhibition of art and digitally enhanced multilayered mediums will navigate the lives and environments of the four great global high seas maritime pioneers will be presented to the global via satellite and a static audience to visit in a magnificent setting on China’s Eastern coastal city of Qingdao, immediately before the start of the 2008 Chinese Olympics. With all eyes turning to the east, the full-board focus on China brings forth “new discoveries of ancient heroes from history” which will continue to shock and surprise the East and more so the West, as the exhibitions will continue on a global Museum tour after the Olympics, challenging western held views, that what has come to light in the recent past will turn upside down our commonly held views on who is really who in the worlds of inner and outer explorations. This comes at a time when the PRC is realising restrictions on religion and spiritual practice.



MARITIME MYSTERIES will ingeniously join the histories of notable explorers of the high seas by placing China’s most famous mariner **Zheng He** in a daring and unique visual extravaganza. Zheng’s journeys along with those of other notable explorers will be linked via physical relics which would have been “found” by Zheng and other global explorers who join the tribute to ancient mariners. Zheng will take his place in the history of mapping the world, alongside like-spirited adventurers, **St. Brendan of Ireland, Erik the Red** and **Christopher Columbus**. The section on spirituality and philosophy will be exploring

mankind’s inner quests in parallel with mans needs to discover and understand the greater world and cosmos around him.



Each of these explorers were notable “Men of God”, except of course Christopher Columbus, who was driven by greed and the search for Eldorado, which destroyed him and almost killed the entire indigenous native population of the Americas

Masterpieces of art of the eras from these then distant lands discovered by each of these unsurpassed explorers will be exhibited in the Chinese port city of Qingdao, alongside interactive “digital stations” placed all over the city which will take participants on re-created journeys of these ancient globetrotters.

According to Chinese sources, Zheng He commanded 7 fleets comprised of 30,000 men and over 300 ships at its height.

The 1405 expedition consisted of 27,800 men and 317 ships. The enormous characteristics of the Chinese ships of the period are confirmed by Western travellers to the East, such as Ibn Battuta and Marco Polo.

According to Ibn Battuta, who visited China in 1347:

"...We stopped in the port of Calicut, in which there were at the time thirteen Chinese vessels, and disembarked. China Sea travelling is done in Chinese ships only, so we shall describe their arrangements. The Chinese vessels are of three kinds; large ships called chunks (junks), middle sized ones called zaws (dhows) and the small ones kakams. The large ships have anything from twelve down to three sails, which are made of bamboo rods plaited into mats. They are never lowered, but turned according to the direction of the wind; at anchor they are left floating in the wind.

Three smaller ones, the "half", the "third" and the "quarter", accompany each large vessel. These vessels are built in the towns of Zaytun and Sin-Kalan. The vessel has four decks and contains rooms, cabins, and saloons for merchants; a cabin has chambers and a lavatory, and can be locked by its occupants.

This is the manner after which they are made; two (parallel) walls of very thick wooden (planking) are raised and across the space between them are placed very thick planks (the bulkheads) secured longitudinally and transversely by means of large nails, each three ells in length. When these walls have thus been built the lower deck is fitted in and the ship is launched before the upper works are finished." (Ibn Battuta).

Paul Hughes is a writer, researcher and arts consultant living in London and Shanghai. His main areas of interest are , the arts in ancient times and the cohesive effect they had on society's then and in bringing those values back into the arts of today, utilising the visual arts as a means to communicate the finer aspects of life past into the present..

The following is an excerpt from Delbert's People of Today where Mr Hughes has been listed since 1994 for his contributions to the arts:

'Studied knitwear design Antwerp 1973 - 1976, founder and knitwear designer of Cachaca (later Liberated Lady) shop, Kings Road, London 1976 - 1979. Sold knitwear business and travelled extensively in Latin America and Africa. Studied and collected ethnic textiles.



Studied textile collections at Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, New York, Brooklyn Museum, Washington Textile Museum and V & A, London, whilst serving an internship handling conservation co-ordination and customer service at Artweave Textile Gallery, New York. In 1980, opened own textile gallery in New York, relocating to San Francisco in 1981.

Founder and proprietor of the Paul Hughes Gallery, London in 1983. Textile exhibitions held at gallery: Pre-Columbian Andean Textile Art, 2'000 Years of Andean Textile Art, European Textiles 15th -20th Century, Kuba Raffia Textiles for Zaire, 17th Century English Embroideries, Textiles of Africa and pre-Columbian and Coptic Textiles.

Travelling exhibitions co-coordinated and curated 1989 - 1996: Pre-Columbian Textile Art (Grasse Austria, 1989 and Milan, Italy, 1991), Tiger Rugs of Tibet (Milan, 1992), African Majesty (Antwerp, Belgium, 1992), Rediscovery of pre-Columbian textiles (Anwerp, 1993), Time Warps (Sammlung, Hauser & Wirth, Zurich, Gallerie Asbek, Copenhagen, Le Monde d'Art, Paris, Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York all in 1995), Andean Textile Art (Kasmin Gallery, New York & Kohseki, Japan, 1996), Resonance (Gordon Reece Gallery, London, 1998) and Feather Light - Mid-Century Furniture and Andean Feather Textiles (Olympia, London, 1998). Back to the Future. Love Art Shanghai 2001.

Most of the above exhibitions have received accolades in reviews from Hali International Textile Magazines to Japan Times.

He has appeared on numerous publications and exhibition catalogues:

"Pre-Columbian Andean Textile Art", Carla Sozzani Editore, Milan, 1991.
Gilbert and George, National Museum Beijing. 1993

"Rediscovery of pre-Columbian Textiles", Lamandart Editors, Antwerp, 1994.

"Time Warps", Paul Hughes Editor, London, 1995.' Publication.

"Love Art" Zendai Group in collaboration with Shanghai TV

Since 1989 we have been collaborating with artists to develop their artworks into hand knotted carpets. Amongst others were Caro Niederer (Swiss) and Cathy De Moncheux (English). In addition we have also developed our own range of designs for hand knotted wool and silk carpets.

See carpet section www.paulhughes.co.uk for further information.
