

NEWS RELEASE



WASHINGTON STATE EXHIBIT TRACES HISTORY OF MAN

Man's relationship with his environment through the ages is the subject of the State of Washington's planned presentation at Expo '74, the 1974 World's Fair.

The filmed production will be the major thrust of an exhibit to be housed in the \$7.5 million Washington State Pavilion now being constructed in Spokane.

Themed "About Time," the film will be phased into three distinct time periods -- time before, time during and time after man's domination over his environment, according to exhibit designer Robert Marona of New York. Its message will be that it is about time man begins to address his technology to the environmental problems created by his earlier technologies.

The theater where it will be shown is one of two to be housed in the gleaming new Pavilion. The other will be a 2,700-seat opera house, a new, modern facility for the performing arts and the many cultural performances planned during the World's Fair.

Designed by the Spokane architectural firm of Walker/McGough/Foltz/Lyerla, the huge, white, wedge-shaped pavilion will be a permanent facility for Spokane. The exhibit space will be converted into a convention center following the Exposition.

Marona's exhibit, however, will be its main attraction between May and October 1974, the six-month period of the Fair.

To reach the theater, the audience is directed through a mall enclosed by a massive glass facade. Passing by a huge mural of posters depicting various scenic attractions in the state, spectators are divided into three groups by gently sloping ramps winding through the exhibit hall into the theater.

As they first enter the ramp area, they are confronted by a huge sunburst sculpture radiating its rays through space.

"Precise beams of illumination make it glow like the sun scattering patterns of reflection over the total audience area," said Marona.

Continuing on, the audience looks out at a "mammoth boulder, its surface chiseled by time," symbolizing the newly created Earth of eons ago.

Finally, a "vertical plane which exceeds in height the tallest ramp" comes into view. It will represent a great cascade of water drops.

"Intriguingly, the entire wall is moving in a state of almost suspended animation. Magically lit, millions of drops slowly descend on invisible gossamer strands in counterpoint to the majestic roar of a great cascade. In this chamber of quiet and contemplation, it is as though the power of even a waterfall has paused on its surge to the sea," Marona said.

Past the cascading waterfall the audience enters the triple-tiered theater. The ramps have divided the group so that one third enters the darkened theater on each of three viewing ramps, stacked vertically along the theater's rear wall. There are no seats and each platform is only two persons deep.

"The audience is securely perched like eagles on the face of a wall," each with a direct line of sight to the screen.

The film is projected on a vast screen, 50 by 25 feet, about 60 feet away. During the course of the showing, moveable side panels reveal huge mirrors, which seem to extend the screen to infinity, engulfing the viewer.

"It was decided to hold the Exposition in one of Earth's most beautiful areas -- the Pacific Northwest," Marona said. "The setting for the film is no less than the total state of Washington."

Marona presented the exhibit concept to the Washington State Commission, the agency created to administer the state's participation in the World's Fair. Following the presentation, the commission unanimously accepted the concept, which will cost \$1,900,000 to develop and operate for the six months of Expo '74.