

FLY FASTER? FLY SHORTER!

CUBIC FULLER

Near the middle of XX century, Buckminster Fuller created a series of maps which are unique in their own kind.

The idea is to start with a polyhedron and inscribe it into a sphere. Then, we need to project on each face of the polyhedron the Earth, by using a gnomonic projection. What we get is a polyhedral version of the Earth which we can unfold in order to get the chart. The gnomonic projection, already known to the Greeks, has the remarkable property of allowing geodesic curves to be traced easily: with this type of projection, geodesic lines are segments. This can be seen by flying the airplane: if we do not curve, our plane will move along a segment until it reaches one of the edges. At that moment it will change direction abruptly and then follow another segment.

