

## POINTILLIST STAMPS FOR WINTER GAMES

For the second time in history, Canada was the proud host of the Olympic Games. Calgary and its mountainous environs were the site for the XVth Winter Olympics where, from 13th to 28th February 1988, almost 2,500 athletes competed at internationally acclaimed facilities.

To commemorate this momentous occasion, Canada Post has issued a three-year series of 11 stamps, including a map of the venues, the 9 Olympic sport disciplines and curling, one of the four demonstration sports. Designing the stamps, however, was not a simple task. Since the purpose of the series was to promote the sports themselves and not individual athletes or teams, it was necessary to develop a technique that eliminated details, yet kept each sport identifiable.

Commissioned to tackle this problem was Montreal designer Pierre-Yves Pelletier, who had headed the graphic design team for the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal. Pelletier felt that the stamp designs should convey the two key qualities of all Olympic sports : speed and precision. To reflect the "split-second" technology of the 1988 competition, he sought a high-tech design solution.

Altogether Canada Post issued 105,000,000 stamps commemorating the 1988 Calgary Olympic Winter Games.

To capture the true feeling of each sport, Pierre-Yves Pelletier chose photographs of athletes in action on which he used a special screening technique. Each dot was drawn with the utmost precision using state-of-the-art technology. The first step was to design a screen of eight dots of varying widths. The dots, aligned at 45°, were made by clipping opposite corners of a square. Assembled in order, the dots show a gradation from light to dark.

The designer used photographs that could be scaled down to stamp size without loss of impact or significance.

Sophisticated computer technology allowed the numerical data to be displayed on a screen as a check against the data obtained manually. A special 900-square grid was superimposed on each photograph to determine which dot would be used in each square to produce the desired image.

A state-of-the-art laser printer was used to read the numerical data and print the computerized image.

