

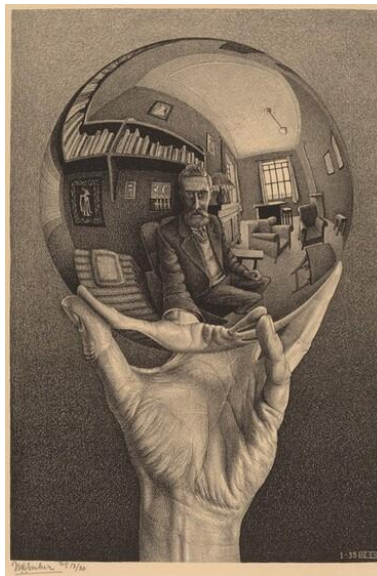
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Maurits Cornelis Escher



Hand With Reflecting Sphere

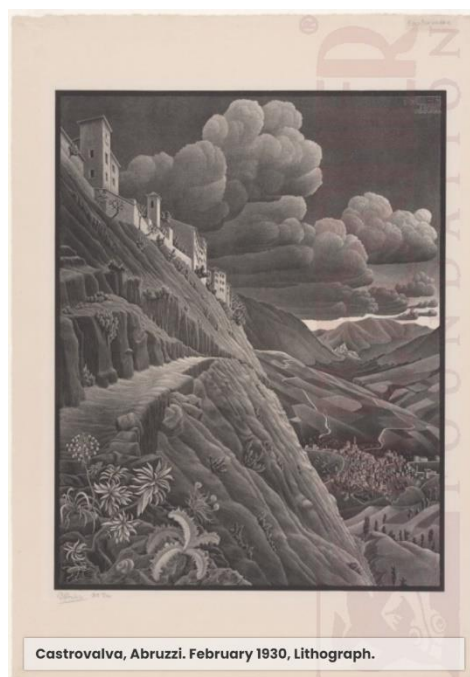
Artistic talent or creative minds are often spoken of, in a casual sense when discussing history's greatest achievers. It is not difficult to be in the middle of a ponder and conjure up an abundance of ideas or innovative concept designs, originating from what seems like an endless line of famous people embedded in time. Ranging from, Leonardo de Vinci, to Paula Scher, the creation of all of history's greatest art minds has been made to prepare, inspire, and give life to a countless variety of artists. However, with so many being known it is easy to succumb to the

illusion of those that go unseen within the greatness they are a part of. One person by the name of Maurits Cornelis Escher, is a perfect example. As a master of optical illusion and surrealism, he is without a doubt well known throughout the art world although, his climb to the top was not an easy one.

Born in 1898, Maurits Cornelis Escher (M.C. Escher) became a part of the world's most famous graphic artists. Leeuwarden was his birthplace, and he was the youngest among his siblings of four. They moved as a family to Arnhem five years later. It was here that most of his childhood was spent. The School of Architecture and Decorative Arts in Harlem is where M.C. Escher would soon begin his education in architecture. With the backing of his mentor Samuel Jessurun de Mesquita, who had seen his art, Escher quit architecture to pursue his love of art. Upon finishing school, he ventured and explored more of Italy eventually meeting Jetta Umiker, who soon became his wife in 1924. Rome would then be their place of romantic adventure until they settled there in 1935. The 11 years he spent traveling in Italy, M.C. Escher focused a vast majority of his time on his drawings and sketches, which he then went to use later on for his woodcuts, wood engravings, and lithographs.

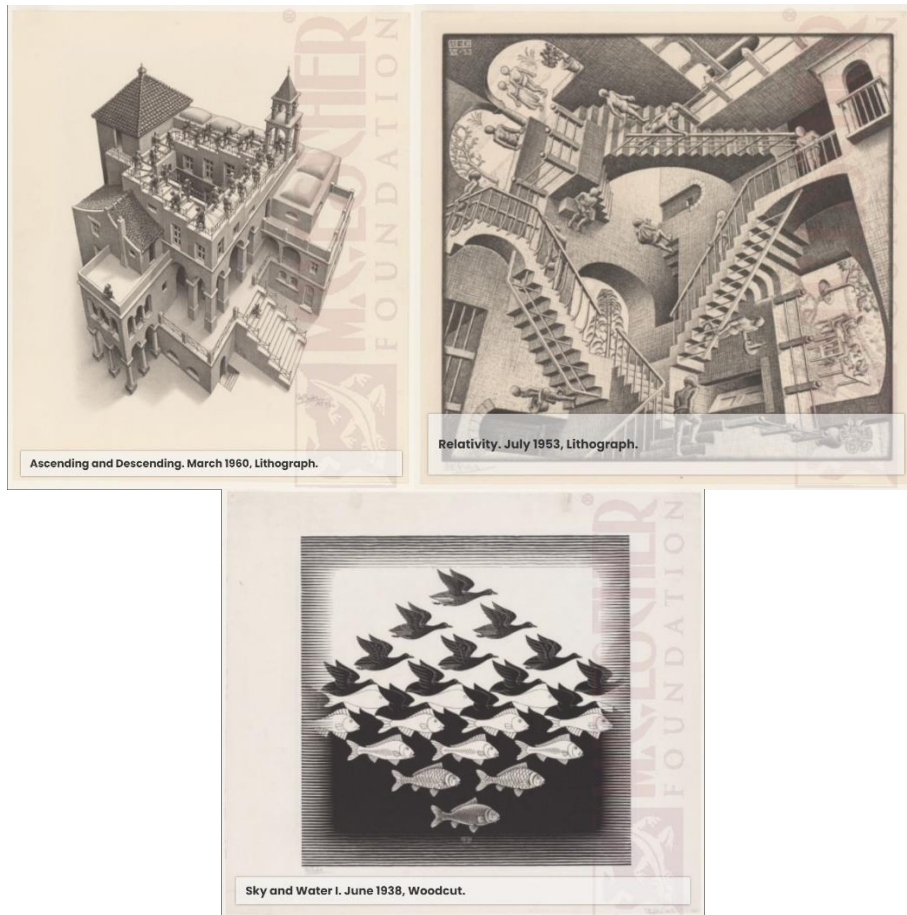
By using linoleum cut, wood engraving, watercolor, lithograph, woodcut, mezzotint, and etching as a medium among all his primary work, Escher would eventually make the majority of them, mainly consisting of woodcut and linoleum. By specializing in woodcut and linoleum cut, M.C. Escher created an abundance of designs at the beginning of entering the world of graphic

arts. Each of which was often submerged in the idea of optical illusions and playing with perspective. Designs such as Tree, 1919 Woodcut is just one of many examples of his style and skill in manipulating perspective using negative space. While in Italy he creates some of his most beautiful yet, authentic designs. One of which was his Castrovalva Abruzzi, where his allure for perspective emerged. Made in 1930, the lithograph of Atrani, is a small town by the coast in Italy, he later turned it into one of his many Metamorphosis I and II masterpieces.



Perplexities was an environment in which Escher truly flourished as he was greatly fond of representation. Being drawn to radical and contrast differences, comparing and uniting things together, he naturally thrived in complexities. He understood that artists deal in converting or changing the state of things into other shapes or forms. This included “two-dimensional factors into the illusion of three-dimensional spaces, or lines into objects, colors into textures”. Escher

immersed himself in these experimental processes of alchemy with observation and distortion in many of his works. This unsurprisingly gave birth to the fame and prestige his work became world-renowned for. His vast amount of unbelievable work included; Ascending and Descending and Relativity, in addition to that, his metamorphoses, such as Metamorphosis I, II and III, Sky and Water I and Reptiles, stood on equal levels of awe.



Around the 1950's, the eyes of the public and some scientists, were pulled towards Escher's designs, at the same time, he was not given any bit of attention from the realm of artist at all.

Never did he ever view himself as a person capable of understanding things scientifically or mathematically and he went as far as to state that he was "absolutely innocent of training or knowledge in the exact sciences..." he still found himself debating among mathematic professionals. His spotlight was finally illuminated to the art world after an interview with Israel Shenker, a journalist from Time-Life, whose interaction and conversation led to Escher being unveiled through an art journal known as "The Studio" which would soon grow and greatly expand M.C. Escher's popularity in 1951. It wasn't long until Escher would be described as "a remarkable and original artist who was able to depict the poetry of the mathematical side of things in a most striking way." An international mathematics conference was then held in 1954, where his artwork and designs were displayed in a massive show in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Those who questioned and pondered the common perspective of insight and distorted thoughts of life would find solace in Escher's artist warp depictions of impossible dimensions. This would eventually become the source of his wide growth in popularity among the young adult audience in the 1960s. His creations were inevitably bound to revolve around a multitude of concepts such as psychology, chemistry, and geology. It would not be a stretch to say a connection between the alternation of time and space also took part in creative interpretation. Regardless of the praise, he received by fascinated young people, he would never find himself indulging in their explanations. Instead, he replied stating "...All I am doing in my prints is to offer a report of my discoveries." M.C. Escher's art was a representation of the wonders his mind concocted as a result of his perspective on how he understood and interacted with the world around him.

Taking everything into account, it can be said that, even though Escher's vivid imagination captivated the minds of all who wished to expand beyond practical comprehension, he stated that his original and only aim was to "testify that we live in a beautiful and orderly world, not in a chaos without norms." It wouldn't be long before Escher was regarded among the wisest and insightful creative minds. His ability to perceive and reconstruct his perspective would become a major factor in solidifying him as one of history's greatest. He passed away in 1972 but sparked the beginning of a new perspective and understanding of the world.



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