

# the Columbia Museum of ART

## NEWS RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Milena Engh, associate director of communications and visitor experience  
803-343-2180 or [mengh@columbiamuseum.org](mailto:mengh@columbiamuseum.org)

### **Escher exhibition headed to the Columbia Museum of Art** Featuring the mind-bending work of one of the world's most famous printmakers



**Columbia, S.C.** – The Columbia Museum of Art presents its featured spring exhibition, [\*The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher\*](#), on view February 6 through June 6, 2021, with a free public preview day on Friday, February 5. A consummate boundary-pusher and arguably the most famous printmaker of the modern era, Maurits Cornelius Escher (1898–1972) used his work to challenge perspectives, deftly exploring the relationships between art and science, reality and illusion, chaos and order, and logic and absurdity.

“Escher has to be one of the most recognized artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His mind-bending, reality-warping prints include subjects like infinite staircases, tessellating birds changing into fish and back again, and two hands drawing each other,” says CMA Executive Director Della Watkins. “His work is known and beloved today by everyone from kids to designers to scientists, and we’re looking forward to sharing it with all our visitors.”

Escher’s images pervade popular culture and fascinate audiences with their imaginative design, consummate draftsmanship, and dreamy visions. Initially inspired by nature, Escher’s work later became submerged in what he referred to as “mental imagery,” a host of subjects influenced by Moorish architecture, mathematical equations, alchemy, and the concept of metamorphosis.

This is the largest private traveling Escher collection in the world and includes woodcuts, lithographs, drawings, and all eight mezzotints from his career. Visitors will see his best-known prints as well as lesser-known works, spanning his entire career from his earliest print to his final masterpiece, and also get a glimpse into the artist’s process with a woodblock study and lithographic stone.

*Imaginative Worlds* is accompanied by *Pressing Voices*, a companion exhibition opening Saturday, January 30, in the Guignard Gallery. *Pressing Voices* brings together a group of printmakers with connections to South Carolina — including Shepard Fairey, Larry Leiby, and Sara Thomas of The Half and Half — to showcase styles and stories that illustrate how a centuries-old artistic process continues to inspire and endure in our state and beyond.

## **M.C. Escher February Programs**

### **Virtual Evening for Educators**

**Wednesday, February 3 | 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. | Zoom**

Join us for a virtual sneak preview of the exhibition *The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher*. Engineer-turned-artist Shakil Akram Khan speaks about the influence of Islamic geometry and mathematical principles in both Escher's work and his own. Free with registration; space is limited to 100 participants. Professional development renewal credit forms available. Supported by Bank of America.

### **The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher Preview Day**

**Friday, February 5 | 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

Celebrate the opening of *The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher* with extended hours, free admission and a lively day of art. Capacities are limited with timed reservations, so book your spot in advance. Free.

### **Art Class: Block-Printed Textiles**

**Saturday, February 6 | 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

In this one-day class, students learn about a variety of printmaking techniques and how to design, carve, and hand print their own textiles with linoleum stamps. Take inspiration from prints in the exhibition *The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher* to create a block-printed tea towel, and leave with the knowledge necessary to continue your printmaking journey. Taught by printmaker Rachel Donnelly, who earned her BFA in studio art at the University of South Carolina and currently creates art in Charlotte, NC. Ages 15 and up. All supplies and equipment provided. Registration limited to 10 participants to ensure physical distancing in the CMA studios, and face coverings are required. \$70 / \$56 for members.

### **Perception Is Deception: Escher's Paradox**

**Sunday, February 7 | 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. | Facebook Live**

Sometimes the more you see, the less you know. Be careful if you walk upstairs in Escher's world, you're likely to end up in the basement! Escher's most useful tool was undoubtedly his imagination, yet his creations are always securely tied to reality. His landscapes show the complex structure of Italian hill towns, and he can make birds and fish seamlessly share space. For the opening weekend lecture of *The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher*, noted Escher scholar Jeffrey Price explains how the artist's pictures show us different worlds within our own. Free on Facebook Live. This lecture will only be available for live viewing.

Price is owner and president of Artists' Market, Inc, of Norwalk, Connecticut, the only gallery in the world with a permanent exhibition of Escher's original work. An Escher specialist, he has lectured extensively on the artist's work to audiences ranging from schoolchildren to scientists. Price has organized exhibitions of Escher's art at the Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Connecticut, and the York College Art Museum in York, Pennsylvania. He was instrumental in assembling the founding Escher collection for the Herakleidon Museum in Athens, Greece, which expanded to be the collection exhibited at the CMA.

### **Art Class: Drawing Perspective Painlessly**

**Saturdays, February 20 and 27 | 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

In this two-part class, students learn how to create a sense of depth in drawing and painting and how to create the illusion of space on a 2D plane while gathering inspiration from *The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher*. Taught by local art educator Mary Hendrix, who holds a bachelor's degree in art from East Tennessee State University and a master's degree in teaching from the University of South Carolina. Ages 15 and up. All materials and equipment provided. Prior drawing experience not required. Capacity limited to 10 participants to ensure physical distancing in the CMA studios, and face coverings are required. \$80 / \$64 for members.

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*The Imaginative Worlds of M.C. Escher* is presented through the support of our generous sponsors and grantors. Presenting sponsor: Dominion Energy. Supporting sponsors: Susan Thorpe and John Baynes. Contributing sponsors: Jeffrey C. Caswell, Caroline and Kester Freeman, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP, and Mrs. Myrtle T. Robinson. Friend sponsors: Mary and John Kessler, Sam and Sandy McGuckin, Ann Marie Stieritz and John Carran, and The Weinkle Family. Patron sponsors: Robbie Barnett and Kathy Schaffer Olson, Barbara Boyd, Julie and Mike Brenan, Mr. and Mrs. David E. Dukes, Dr. and Mrs. Benjamin M. Gimarc, Good Neighbour Foundation, Michelin North America, Mr. William C. Schmidt Jr., Brenda and Rick Wheeler, and Dr. and Mrs. Peter A. Zvejnieks. Media sponsors: *Free*

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Collection of Paul and Anna Belinda Firos, Athens, Greece.

The CMA has implemented cleaning and physical distancing practices to safeguard staff and visitors. Face coverings are required for everyone over the age of two. Learn more about what to expect during your visit [here](#).

For more information, visit [columbiamuseum.org](http://columbiamuseum.org).

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### **About the CMA**

The Columbia Museum of Art is a charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to lifelong learning and community enrichment for all. Located in the heart of downtown Columbia, S.C., the CMA ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and creative educational programs. At the heart of the CMA and its programs is its collection, which encompasses 7,000 works and spans 5,000 years of art history. Established in 1950, the CMA now welcomes more than 150,000 visitors annually and is a catalyst for community creativity and education, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds. It is the recipient of a National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a National Art Education Association award for its contributions to arts education, a National Park Foundation Award, and two Governor's Awards for the Arts for outstanding contributions to the arts in South Carolina. In order to serve even more audiences, the CMA underwent a transformation. Funded by a successful capital campaign, the two-year renovation project garnered new collection galleries with a progressive thematic layout, new studios for artmaking, cutting-edge program and event spaces, and an entrance on Main Street. Overall, more than 15,000 square feet of functional space were added to the building's existing footprint. To learn more, visit [columbiamuseum.org](http://columbiamuseum.org).



### **General Info:**

803-799-2810

[www.columbiamuseum.org](http://www.columbiamuseum.org)

### **Location:**

1515 Main Street | Columbia, SC 29201

### **General Museum Admission:**

\$10 or less every day.

Always FREE for members.

### **Museum Hours:**

Open 5 days a week!

Wednesday – Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

First Thursdays: 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Closed Mondays, Tuesdays, and major holidays.

