

**A Major Exhibit of Iconic and Mesmerizing Works by M. C. Escher
Opens at The Reading Public Museum**

September 4, 2024—Reading, Pa This mesmerizing exhibition brings the work of world-renowned draftsman and printmaker, M.C. Escher, to Reading this fall. *M.C. Escher Infinite Variations* opens Saturday, September 21, 2024 and runs through Sunday, January 5, 2025. The exhibit spans the artist’s entire career with more than 150 works from a private collection. Although Escher was one of the modern period’s most well-known graphic artists, he once puzzled an interviewer by referring to himself as a mathematician rather than an artist.

Escher’s fascination with mathematical theory motivated him to produce imagery that constantly challenged notions of reality and its underlying structures. This comprehensive exhibition chronicles his journey as one of the world’s most recognized artists by presenting the full range of media in which he worked from his time in Italy and Spain to his late works in the Netherlands.

Curator of art, Scott A. Schweigert noted that, “the scale and scope of the exhibition will give visitors of all ages insight into the unique creative process employed by Escher. The magic of Escher’s appeal rests, in part, in his ability to engage the viewer with intricacy and seemingly impossible optical illusions that make us all question our own eyes. The show has been a huge hit at previous venues, and we anticipate our audience in southeastern Pennsylvania will flock to see the show while it is on view at RPM. *Infinite Variations* is a perfect blend of science and art, and the nostalgia and popular culture aspect will stir memories for many.”

Visitors will encounter woodcuts, lithographs, etchings and even a lithography stone. Among the art on view are some of his most iconic works, including *Day and Night*, in which two flocks of birds blend into Holland’s natural landscape, and *Ascending and Descending*, a 1960 print of an impossible building with a staircase that mirrors a twisting möbius strip. In addition to other famous images that made the artist’s reputation, such as *Drawing Hands*, *Waterfall Eye*, and

Relativity, the collection features some seldom displayed prints including the *Griffin of Borghese*, *Still Life*, and *Street*, and a series of mezzotints, among other engaging works.

Maurits Cornelis Escher (1898 – 1972) was born in Leeuwarden, the capital of Friesland in the Netherlands, but grew up in Arnhem. Although he studied architecture in Haarlem, he was drawn to graphic art. When Escher moved to Italy, his early output was dominated by advertising and images of the Italian landscape. He became famous for his tessellated, or tile-like, patterns after seeing Moorish tilework on a trip to the Alhambra and Granada, Spain in 1936. The rise of fascism forced him to flee Italy for Switzerland. He made his way to Belgium and returned to the Netherlands after the Nazi invasion and occupation.

Escher's increasingly sophisticated imagery gained an appreciative audience, especially during his first exhibition at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum in 1954, staged to coincide with the International Congress of Mathematicians. He remained skeptical of the enthusiasm for his work among fans of psychedelia during the 1960s, turning down a request from Mick Jagger to design an album cover. Some of his psychedelic "dorm room" posters will also be featured in the exhibition.

M.C. Escher: Infinite Variations is provided through PANART Connections, and is sponsored locally by the Marlin and Ginger Miller Exhibition Endowment.

The Reading Public Museum is supported in part by grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and is located at 500 Museum Road, Reading, Pa. Admission per day is \$10 adults (18-64), \$6 children/seniors/college students (w/ID) and free to Members and children three years old and under. The Museum is open daily 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visit online: www.readingpublicmuseum.org