

Title:

Maurice Cornelius Escher - MC Escher

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Summary:

MC ESCHER

"I play a tiresome game" - MC ESCHER

1. One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish
2. No Apt Pupil
3. The Creature In The Forest
4. Head In The Clouds
5. The Puzzler
6. Impossible Architect
7. On His Mind
8. Virtual Relativity
9. A Rolling Stone
10. Wandering Enigma

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Article Body:

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1. One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish

Maurice Cornelius Escher, known to his friends and family as Mauk, was initially set to be an architect. He was to attend the Higher Technical School in Delft. But, his plans went asunder when he failed his final exams in nearly all of his classes including history, constitutional organization, political economy and bookkeeping. His father later noted that Mauk drew and created a linocut of a sunflower to comfort himself after the blunder.

2. No Apt Pupil

He was later able to retake the exams and entered the school in Delft. It was here that Professor R.N. Roland Holst encouraged him to try his hand at woodcuts and engraving versus architecture. The legendary art of MC Escher had achieved its planting.

3. The Creature In The Forest

Not wanting to disappoint his parents, Mauk continued with architectural studies. However with poor grades Mauk had to find another school in order to do so. He made a last ditch attempt at it at the School for Architecture and Decorative Arts. Then a chance meeting occurred with Samuel Jesserum de Mesquita, a graphic arts teacher. It was a red-letter day for MC Escher aka Mauk. De Mesquita convinced him that he would be much better suited for a career in graphic arts than architecture.

4. Head In The Clouds

Where and when did Escher begin his methodical approach to his life and art? Well, as a child Mauk had an intensely acute sense of wonder. And like many children he would lie on his back and gaze to the sky, seeing shapes in the clouds. With the strong influence from his parents engineering background, it is no wonder then that young Mauk began to see how these free floating shapes could evolve and dissolve in the white pillowy vapor. Tactile applications began to form in his mind making logic out of random chaos.

5. The Puzzler

He was often frustrated with his lack of drawing ability and regarded his mathematical prowess as insecure at best. However he developed his own categorization system that covered all the possible combinations of shape, color and symmetrical properties. By doing so, he had unknowingly studied areas of crystallography for many years. This was the groundwork for his patterns, known

as tessellations.

Tessellate: to construct, pave, or decorate something with small pieces such as stone or glass in order to give a mosaic effect.

6. Impossible Architect

His most famous works of art often depict enigmatic turns and twists that fold back onto themselves. Ascending and Descending, Relativity and the Transformation Prints, such as, Metamorphosis I, II and III, Sky & Water and Reptiles which are among the most recognized of his work.

7. On His Mind

What would Escher think?

How would he feel about computer programs that can now automatically create the intricate tessellations he slaved over for hours on end?

He often wrote to his son Arthur about the conundrums he faced with his work, "God, I wish I could learn to draw better! It takes so much effort and perseverance to do it well. Sometimes I am close to delirium with pure nerves. It is really only a question of battling on relentlessly with constant and, if possible, merciless self-criticism. I think that making prints the way I do it is almost only a matter of very much wanting to do it well. For the most part, things like talent are mere poppycock. Any schoolboy with a bit of aptitude might draw better than I; but what is usually lacking is the unwavering desire for expression, obstinacy gnashing its teeth and saying, 'Even though I know I cannot do it, I still want to do it.'"

Maybe he himself wouldn't have minded the aid of a computer in concocting his elaborate creations. Most likely he would have seen it as just another tool for bringing his visions to light.

8. Virtual Relativity

However, he most likely would have felt out of touch with his art. Like so many artists today, their art is no longer tactile. It lacks mass and weight because it only exists virtually on a computer screen. Escher adorned many of his prints with the phrase, "eigen druk". The literal translation means, "This print is drawn with my own hands".

9. A Rolling Stone

The lead singer of the Rolling Stones, Mick Jagger, started a series of letters to Escher on New Year's Day in 1969. Jagger wanted to use one of Escher's works on the jacket of their newest LP, "Through the Past Darkly". Mick was a huge fan of Escher, but Escher did not return the sentiment. Escher was not a tame

person, but he preferred classical music to rock and roll. Due to his many obligations at the time, Escher declined to provide Jagger with any designs for their cover art. Much to Jagger's disappointment, the album was released with a hexagonally designed cover-sleeve that was influenced by Escher's "Verbum" image.

10. Wandering Enigma

He was constantly amazed at what other people would read into his creations and would often debunk any kind of elaborate explanations.

"I have never attempted to depict anything mystic; what some people claim to be mysterious is nothing more than a conscious or unconscious deceit! I have played a lot of tricks, and I have had a fine old time expressing concepts in visual terms, with no other aim than to find out ways of putting them on to paper."

Take a look at some of the art of MC Escher.