

North Carolina Museum of Art Presents M. C. Escher, Leonardo da Vinci Exhibitions and Related Events

Raleigh, N.C.—The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) presents two exhibitions opening in October 2015: *The Worlds of M. C. Escher: Nature, Science, and Imagination* and *Leonardo da Vinci’s Codex Leicester and the Creative Mind*. [The Worlds of M. C. Escher](#) features over 130 works (some never before exhibited) and will be the most comprehensive Escher exhibition ever presented in the United States. The [Codex Leicester](#) is a 500-year-old notebook handwritten and illustrated by inventor, scientist, and artist Leonardo da Vinci—the only manuscript by Leonardo in North America—that offers a glimpse into one of the greatest minds in history.

“This is going to be an exciting fall at the Museum—an incredibly rare opportunity for our visitors to see not only centuries-old writings and sketches by Leonardo da Vinci, but also the work of M. C. Escher, another observer of nature and a perfect modern counterpart to Leonardo,” says NCMA Director Lawrence J. Wheeler. “These exhibitions will thrill art lovers and science lovers alike, and we hope that all visitors leave with a piqued curiosity, an ignited imagination, and a desire to more closely observe the world around them.”



***The Worlds of M. C. Escher: Nature, Science, and Imagination*
October 17, 2015–January 17, 2016**

Comprising over 130 woodcuts, lithographs, wood engravings, and mezzotints, as well as numerous drawings, watercolors, wood blocks, and lithographic stones never before exhibited, *The Worlds of M. C. Escher* surveys Escher’s entire career, from his earliest print to his final masterpiece. The exhibition highlights Escher’s explorations of nature, mathematics, science, and the realm of his imagination. Escher’s best-known prints are on view, as well as his lesser-known portraits and Italian landscapes. It is the most comprehensive Escher exhibition ever presented in the United States.

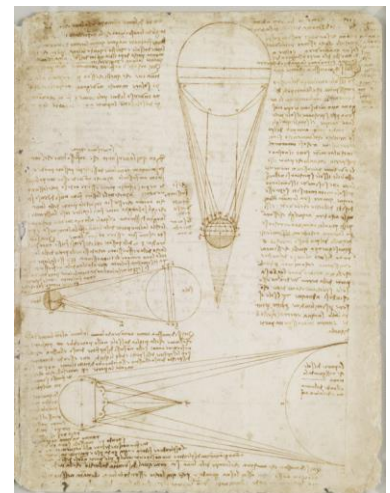
The works are on loan from leading public Escher collections, including those at the National Gallery of Art and the National Gallery of Canada, as well as several of the foremost private collections of Escher’s work.

Highlights in the exhibition include:

- *G. A. Escher* (1916): Escher’s first print
- *Castrovalva [Abruzzi]* (February 1930): Escher’s finest landscape print
- *Sky and Water I* (June 1938): inspiration for the July 5, 2010, *New Yorker* cover
- *Drawing Hands* (January 1948)
- *Relativity* (July 1953)
- *Belvedere* (May 1958)
- *Ringsnakes* (July 1969): Escher’s final masterpiece

***Leonardo da Vinci’s Codex Leicester and the Creative Mind*
October 31, 2015–January 17, 2016**

The *Codex Leicester*, a 500-year-old notebook from inventor, scientist, and artist Leonardo da Vinci, is composed of 36 folios, each handwritten on the front and back and illustrated with sketches of the topics Leonardo is discussing. It is the only Leonardo manuscript in North America. The notes, inscribed in his distinctive “mirror writing,” provide a glimpse into the artist’s scientific mind, revealing his intellectual curiosity and observations on nature. The *Codex Leicester* focuses on his thoughts and beliefs about water, astronomy, light, and mechanics.



Two 27-inch-tall interactive touch-screen devices, called Codescopes, will allow visitors in the gallery to view translations and explanations of the text and sketches. Visitors will be able to select portions of the *Codex Leicester* to explore in depth and will be able to see additional background information, video, and animations relating to Leonardo's experiments.

Additionally, seven contemporary works that complement the themes and ideas in the *Codex Leicester* will be on view in an adjacent gallery. These works—both from the Museum's permanent collection and on loan from other institutions—include:

- Harold Edgerton, *Milk Drop Coronet*, 1936: a photograph of a drop of milk nearly identical to Leonardo's sketch of a drop of water in the *Codex Leicester*
- Kiki Smith, *Tidal*, 1999: a photograph of the phases of the moon connecting to Leonardo's explorations of astronomy in the *Codex Leicester*
- Devorah Sperber, *After the Mona Lisa 2*, 2005: a contemporary tribute to Leonardo's most famous painting

In the Museum's West Building, two works in the permanent collection that connect to Leonardo's life as an artist will be highlighted:

- Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio, *Portrait of a Young Girl Crowned with Flowers*, circa 1495–99: a portrait by one of Leonardo's top students
- Benedetto Briosco, *Venus Mourning Adonis*, circa 1490–1515: a mysterious marble relief attributed to Briosco, whom Leonardo described as "my pal"

College Exhibition: Engineering Infinity

October 17, 2015–January 17, 2016

East Building, Level B, Studio 3

Engineering Infinity features an outreach project with the College of Engineering at North Carolina State University (NCSU). Over the course of two semesters, four seniors found inspiration in Escher's and Leonardo's work to create a display for the public. Using the design process as their framework (ask, imagine, plan, create, and improve), the students designed an "infinity cube." They applied ingenuity and their expertise in developing a system that integrates sensors, mirrors, and lights to create an infinite space within the cube.

Surrounding the interactive display, a timeline documents the design process with visual references to works by Escher and Leonardo, exploratory sketches for prototypes, photographs taken during construction, and examples of productive failure. The students' experience is captured in video interviews.

Engineering Infinity is on view in a gallery adjacent to *The Worlds of M. C. Escher and Leonardo da Vinci's Codex Leicester*. Visitors are encouraged to make connections between the student exhibition's concepts of perception, perspective, illusion, and infinity, and the work by Escher and Leonardo.

Related Events

(December and January events to be announced at a later date)

Mixed Media: Optics

Friday, October 9, 7–9 pm

East Building, Level C

\$30 Members, \$35 Nonmembers

A mixologist and an ophthalmologist walk into a bar ... or better yet, a museum ... and chat about optical illusions, Escher, blurred vision, and designer cocktails. Enjoy an evening of edutainment with hors d'oeuvres and games.

Escher Opening Day Pancake Breakfast Featuring the PancakeBot

Saturday, October 17, 9 am

East Building, Exhibition Café, Level C

\$15 Per person, free for children 2 and under

Come experience an exhibition opening like no other with tessellated pancakes! PancakeBot inventor Miguel Valenzuela and his daughter Lily will be on hand to design and create Escher-inspired pancakes. Buffet breakfast includes a custom Escher pancake, classic pancakes, bacon, fruit, and beverages.

Special Pop-Up Art on Opening Weekend of *The Worlds of M. C. Escher*
October 17 and 18, 10 am–4 pm
East Building and Museum Plaza (weather permitting)
Free; no reservations necessary. All ages

Special pop-up art activities inspired by the Escher exhibition, including BetaBox maker space demonstrations.

Angels and Devils: Member Opening for Fall Exhibitions
Friday, October 30, 7–9:30 pm
East Building
\$40 Members, \$50 Nonmembers

Open your imagination to the worlds of M. C. Escher and Leonardo da Vinci at a fun pre-Halloween party. Light hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine, and music await. Black and white attire is encouraged.

Cocktails, Craft, and Camaraderie
Tuesday, October 20, 6:30–9:30 pm
East Building, Education Garden
\$45 Members, \$55 Nonmembers

Come out for a night of 3-D printing and laser cutting with Raleigh's own BetaBox maker space. Sip cocktails while exploring ways to combine tech and craft. Plus: Become a member and see the Escher exhibition free!

Lectures

Lunch and Lecture: "A Curator's Perspective on M. C. Escher"
Friday, November 13, 11 am
East Building, Museum Auditorium
\$25 Members, \$30 Nonmembers

Curator David Steel discusses the fortuitous circumstances that led to the Museum's comprehensive Escher exhibition.

Member Lecture: "The Creative Thinkers"
Saturday, November 14, 10:30 am
East Building, Museum Auditorium
Free for members, \$7 Nonmembers; tickets required

Though born centuries apart, Leonardo da Vinci and M. C. Escher shared common interests. Both were keen observers of the world around them, and both combined this with their interests in mathematics and the sciences. David Steel, curator of both exhibitions, introduces us to two remarkable artists and thinkers.

Perspectives on Paper
Saturday, November 14, 1–4 pm
East Building, Level B Galleries
Free with paid exhibition ticket

Hear experts in mathematics, sciences, and the arts talk briefly about their favorite pages in the *Codex Leicester* or prints from *The Worlds of M. C. Escher*. Come for one talk, or stay and listen to them all.

Lecture: "You and the Creative Mind of Leonardo da Vinci"
Sunday, November 22, 2:30 pm
East Building, Museum Auditorium
Free; ticket required

Michael Gelb, author of *How to Think Like Leonardo da Vinci*, encourages listeners to be both efficient and creative. With references to the *Codex* and other works by Leonardo, Gelb links living the best life and the work of the master artist. Book signing follows.

Performance

The NCMA and Raleigh Chamber Music Guild present: Sights and Sounds on Sundays
Mallarmé Chamber Players
Sunday, November 1, 3 pm
Museum Auditorium, East Building
\$12 Museum members, youth 7-18, college students with ID; \$14 All others

Inspired by the exhibition *The Worlds of M. C. Escher*, the Mallarmé Chamber Players have chosen a fascinating work by J. S. Bach that's meant to be experienced from multiple perspectives.

The Durham-based ensemble performs the entire Bach *Musical Offering* on baroque period instruments, featuring Elizabeth Field, baroque violin; Suzanne Rousso, baroque viola; Stephanie Vial, baroque cello, Rebecca Troxler, traverso flute; and Elaine Funaro, harpsichord.

Studio Classes

Alabaster in the Time of Leonardo
Saturday and Sunday, September 26-27, 10 am-5 pm both days
East Building, Studio 2
\$165 Members, \$175 Nonmembers

Take a virtual trip back in time and create a sculpture of translucent Italian stone. Award-winning sculptor Paris Alexander (parisalexander.org) leads this two-day workshop. His last class sold out, so register early. All materials included. Bring a bag lunch.

Exploring Illusion through Drawing
Saturday and Sunday, October 24-25, 10 am-4 pm both days
East Building, Studio 2
\$130 Members, \$135 Nonmembers

Inspired by Escher's work, students combine traditional and experimental drawing techniques and materials to achieve optical illusions. Lori Esposito (loriesposito.com) leads this two-day workshop for beginner and advanced students. All materials included. Bring a bag lunch.

Studio Samplers
Tuesdays, 1:30-4 pm
Meet in West Building Lobby
\$30 Members, \$35 Nonmembers (per class)
All supplies provided. Register by Thursday before the class.

November 10: Everything That Rises Must Converge
This refresher workshop on one-, two-, and three-point linear perspective reinforces what Leonardo mastered and what participants see in the Escher exhibition.

November 17: The World Upside Down
After looking at M. C. Escher works and the permanent collection, create your own impossible scenes that defy the conventions of Western atmospheric perspective.

December 1: The Power of Observation
After a preview glimpse of the Leonardo da Vinci exhibition, create a sketchbook to take into the world so that you can follow the artist's example and record what you see.

Youth and Family

Family Fun Saturdays

Saturdays, 10 am–noon or 1–3 pm

East Building, Education Studios

Families with children ages 5–11

\$5 Members, \$8 Nonmembers

Gallery tour plus studio workshops for families. A different theme each time means there's always something new to discover. Please note: All participants (children and adults) must have a ticket. These popular workshops sell out quickly, so reserve your spot early.

October 24: Special Program: BetaBox Workshop (10 am–noon only)

BetaBox, a mobile maker space, is parked at the NCMA! In this family workshop, use 3-D printers and laser cutters to design and create miniature works of art inspired by M. C. Escher. Space is limited; register early.

November 21: Optical Illusions

Discover the unusual worlds of M. C. Escher, and create a work of art that fools the eye.

Special Family Tours of *The Worlds of M. C. Escher* (30-minute tour)

For families with kids (or grandkids) ages 6–12

Free tour (with paid exhibition ticket)

Sign up at the Box Office that day; first come, first served.

Saturday, October 17, 11:30 am, 1:30 pm, and 2:30 pm

Saturday, November 14, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Sunday, November 15, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Saturday, December 12, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Sunday, December 13, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Saturday, January 9, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Sunday, January 10, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Teens and College Students

College Night 2015

Friday, October 23, 7 pm

East Building

Free with College ID

A radically different Museum experience planned by our College Advisory Council featuring music, art, and fashion inspired by the optical illusions of M. C. Escher. Explore the Escher exhibition while listening to musical performances, or tap into your own creativity at a pop-up maker space sponsored by BetaBox.

Teen Workshop: Printmaking in Escher's World

Saturday, November 7, 1–4 pm

Meet in East Building Lobby

\$15 Members, \$20 Nonmembers

Explore the convergence of math and visual art in the Escher exhibition. Under the guidance of local artist Derek Toomes, experiment with printmaking and create your own works of art. Register by Tuesday, November 3. All materials provided.

Book Club

NCMA Book Club Discussion: *Leonardo and the Last Supper*

Saturday, September 26, 11 am

East Building, Level C

Free; ticket required

Leonardo and the Last Supper, Ross King

The gifted artist's life was filled with tremendous success and regrettable failings.

Tours

**Free tour (with paid exhibition ticket) for individuals and groups of up to eight.
Sign up at the Box Office that day; first come, first served.**

The Worlds of M. C. Escher: Nature, Science, and Imagination (one-hour tour)

Saturday, November 7, 12:30 pm
Sunday, November 8, 12:30 pm
Friday, November 13, 6:30 pm
Sunday, November 15, 12:30 pm
Saturday, November 21, 12:30 pm
Thursday, December 10, 12:30 pm
Saturday January 2, 12:30 pm
Sunday, January 3, 12:30 pm

Leonardo da Vinci's Codex Leicester and the Creative Mind (one-hour tour)

Friday, November 6, 6:30 pm
Thursday, November 12, 12:30 pm
Sunday, November 22, 12:30 pm
Sunday, December 6, 12:30 pm
Saturday, December 19, 12:30 pm
Thursday, January 7, 12:30 pm

Special Family Tours of *The Worlds of M. C. Escher* (30-minute tour)

For families with kids (or grandkids) ages 6–12

Saturday, October 17, 11:30 am, 1:30 pm, and 2:30 pm
Saturday, November 14, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm
Sunday, November 15, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm
Saturday, December 12, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm
Sunday, December 13, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm
Saturday, January 9, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm
Sunday, January 10, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Ticketing Information

The Worlds of M. C. Escher: Nature, Science, and Imagination

October 17, 2015–January 17, 2016

East Building, Level B, Meymandi Exhibition Gallery

Ticket prices (joint ticket with *Leonardo da Vinci's Codex Leicester and the Power of Observation*):

\$18 Adults

\$15 Seniors (65+), military, groups of 10+, college students with current ID

\$12 Youth 7–18

Free: Members (first visit), children 6 and under, college students on Friday nights 5–9 pm (with current ID)

Tickets go on sale to members on August 20, 2015, and to the general public on September 15, 2015.

Exhibitions are ticketed together. Ticket buyers who visit *The Worlds of M. C. Escher* before the *Codex Leicester* opens on October 31 will receive a voucher for a return visit.

Leonardo da Vinci's Codex Leicester and the Creative Mind

October 31, 2015–January 17, 2016

East Building, Level B, Gallery 2

Joint ticket with *The Worlds of M. C. Escher*. See above for price and on-sale dates.

About the Exhibitions

The Codex Leicester is on loan from Bill Gates. In Raleigh generous support is provided by the Ron and Jeanette Doggett Fund. This exhibition is also made possible, in part, by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources; the North Carolina Museum of Art Foundation, Inc.; and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment for Educational Exhibitions. Research for this exhibition was made possible by Ann and Jim Goodnight/The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fund for Curatorial and Conservation Research and Travel.

- Presenting Sponsor: Duke Energy
- Participating Sponsors: celito.net and Quintiles
- Media Partner: CBC (Capitol Broadcasting Company, Inc.)

The Worlds of M. C. Escher is organized by the North Carolina Museum of Art.

- Presenting Sponsor: Duke Energy
- Participating Sponsors: Lord Corporation and Quintiles
- Media Partner: CBC (Capitol Broadcasting Company, Inc.)

This exhibition is also made possible, in part, by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources; the North Carolina Museum of Art Foundation, Inc.; and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment for Educational Exhibitions. Research for this exhibition was made possible by Ann and Jim Goodnight/The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fund for Curatorial and Conservation Research and Travel.

Image Captions

Leonardo da Vinci, *Codex Leicester (Sheet 1A, folio 1r)*, 1508–10, ink on paper, 11 2/3 x 8 1/2 in., Courtesy of Bill Gates, © 1994 bgC3

M. C. Escher, *Hand with Reflecting Sphere (Self-Portrait in Spherical Mirror)*, 1935, lithograph, 12 1/2 x 8 3/8 in., Collection of Rock J. Walker, New York, © 2015 The M. C. Escher Company, The Netherlands. All rights reserved. www.mcescher.com

###

About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum's collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum opened West Building, home to the permanent collection, in 2010. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Lawrence J. Wheeler, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Pat McCrory, governor, and an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, Susan Kluttz, secretary.