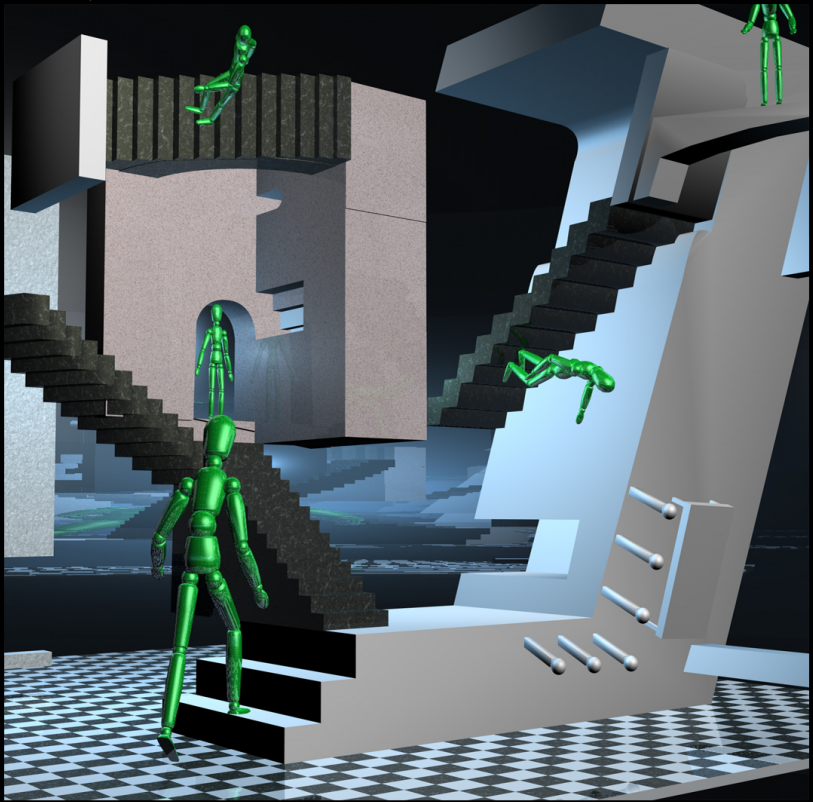


PARADIGM SHIFT



A SHORT STORY FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE
BY CHRIS BALLARD



PARADIGM SHIFT

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[*pref-is*]

I was in the fifth grade when I first observed M.C. Escher's illustration, "Relativity." I found it fascinating in that there were so many perspectives within one single viewpoint. It would be many years later before I could even begin to understand how this picture had become such an impression on my own philosophy of life.

In an attempt to fully realize and understand how this visionary work of art could be realized, I created a three-dimensional model based on the two-dimensional image. I wanted to take the study further as it held my interest for so many years. It challenged my artistic capabilities as I moved the viewpoint of the camera within the scene from the model I had built. I was frustrated and discouraged. Creating a realistic three-dimensional scene based on a single plane of view with multiple perspectives was unrealistic.

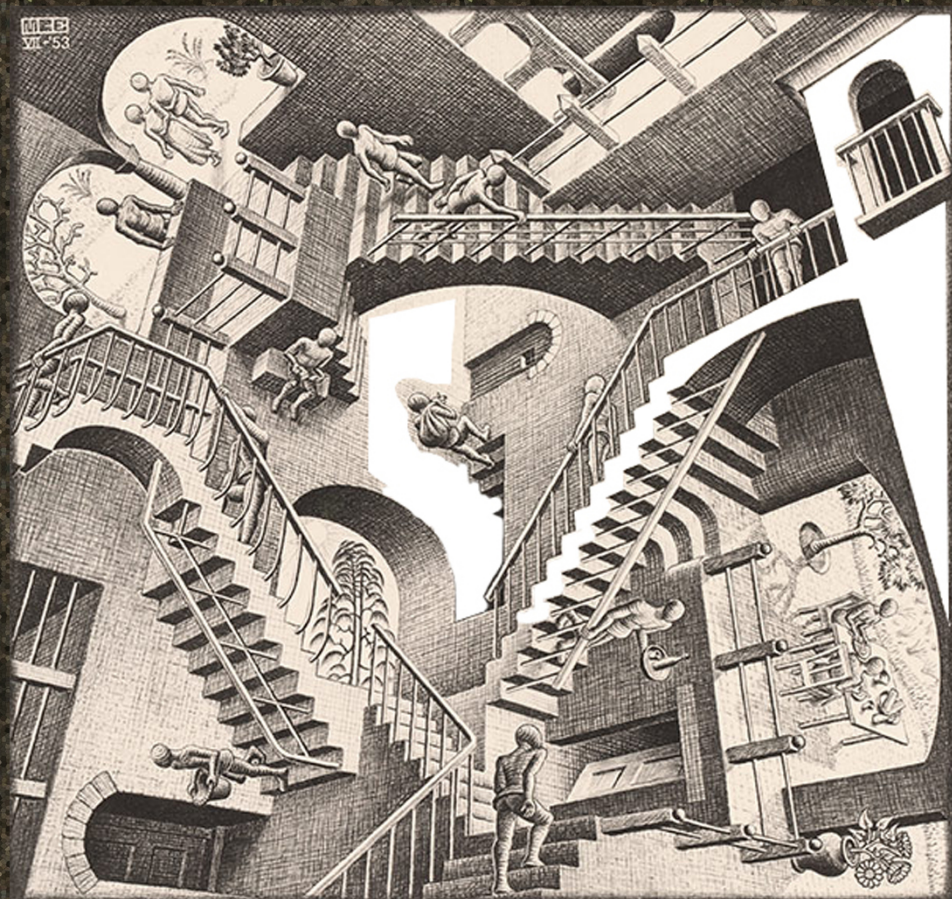
A number of life-changing events were occurring during this time as I felt I was in a transitional phase, mid-life crisis, or just needed to work through the distortions of my own skewed perspective. I began to put the two ideas together as "life" and "Relativity" was more than what appeared on the surface. The optical illusions break down upon looking at them from a different angle, or perspective.

Dreams are often inspiring and guide our inner ambitions. Our mind is constantly in search for happiness, acceptance, and a number of worldly desires. The more we know, the less we understand as life's circumstances continuously change and shift directions. "Relativity" becomes a guiding principle in that we begin to see there are multiple factors of consideration and the real illusion is within our own perception of life. That is the brilliance of M.C. Escher's painting.

I hope you enjoy this short story written as a dreamscape walking through the various perspectives of M.C. Escher's "Relativity."

Love and Wishes!





"Relativity" MC Escher, 1953

PARADIGM SHIFT

A SHORT STORY FROM CHRIS BALLARD

I stepped between the open doorway to peek inside the room. There was an air of mustiness and dust had gathered on every surface. Even the floor was unkept. There was evidence that someone had been here recently as marks of bare footprints disturbed the dust pattern. I gained the courage to follow just to see where it would lead.

As I stepped through the foyer of the room, it suddenly seemed to expand. I was in another dream state and understood that my mind was taking control of my visionary desires to reconstruct imaginative thoughts of endless possibilities. The brain becomes a creative force while in a deep state of unconscious sleep to help resolve issues, both past and present, that seem to dwell on our efforts to change them in reality. Perception often becomes an angle or a change of perspective that makes logical sense as we alter course...in our dreamscape.

Even so, it was all strangely familiar, yet there were new depths of my own inner sanctum to discover. Was it a recurring dream I could not fully remember and needed to focus more closely on those details hidden within the clouded veil of memories.

“I’ve been here before.” I thought. Yes, this had become a recurring dream on many levels. I entered the room to get what I needed. I suddenly forgot what I was looking for.

“Strange,” I thought, stopping for a moment to consider my direction. I put my finger to my chin as if that would help me to remember.

“I’ll know it when I see it.”

The room began to grow as plants flowered and bloomed instantly before my eyes. The dream was a progression of life rapidly advancing in some bizarre time-altered continuum of nature taking liberties within it’s own rate of maturity. More rooms began to appear and suddenly there were stairways leading to more levels that were building instantaneously as fast as could be imagined. Was this a result of my creative forces trying to build new solutions to a world that had already been constructed with walls and barriers that contained my ambitions...or was I truly going mad?

In reality, my eyes were closed in a deep state of sleep as my mind had broken through the portal of possibilities. I took the stairs to the floor above. The footprints in the dust dissipated as I moved forward and upwards in elevation. The walls were somewhat bare and

there was still much evidence from lack of maintenance, but I had already chosen this path and would see where it could take me.

I would be responsible for the path I chose for myself and stay the course until there were no other options to consider. It really didn't matter that the perspective continued to change as I wandered through my own mental conceptions. I was always at the center of the universe as long as I could distort the truth and bend reality to facilitate my own fantasy.

Dreamscapes are indeed fantasies, yet spiritual in a sense that they are a guide to how the world should be from a certain perspective. Oftentimes a dream generates the willpower and initiative to begin taking those steps that will lead us to the answers we seek. The stairway to Heaven is long and arduous and one misstep can have you plummeting back towards the earth's gravitational pull. I was very careful in making sure my foothold was well-grounded as I began the incline along the staircase. It was leading me in a direction of discovery. I think I already knew that, but the dream was so real that I felt as if I had been born again.

I am more inclined to believe in the psychological connections penetrating my thoughts rather than spiritual interventions. There must be some reasoning to what I was experiencing. Religion had always been a promise of better things to come if you believed. Faith is a one-point

perspective in a complex world of optical illusions that become deceptive devices in nature. Reality is a three dimensional world with scientific explanations to explain the world in which we live. Each of us is on the verge of discovery at every moment in life. That is our true blessing.

I wanted to change my own reality. I was not satisfied with the fantasy I was living. It was a mansion of emptiness and I needed to fill it with substantial convictions that would qualify my own needful desires of elegant truths. I was tired of the ever-changing angles that continued to disrupt my progressive efforts with obstacles of frustration that only led towards a path of deception. Faith could not support me on a level of compromising resolutions of issues directly related to sudden changes in direction. The world in my own dreamscape was changing so fast, I was no longer certain about the steps I was taking...I almost fell.

I was awakened from my dream for a brief moment, but did not want to disturb reality as I was determined to unlock the mysteries within my own conceptual dilemma of projected liberties from my own selfish challenges to myself. My ego was fighting within it's own ambitions. I had been suffering as a result. I needed explanations.

Maybe that was what I was looking for.

I am not one to sit comfortably in my own familiarity as I am constantly in need of facing new challenges and seeing life from another perspective. I had been raised with an introverted mind seeking approval in a society of extroverted nonsense. I could not compete with those without the capabilities of understanding others from different perspectives as they only had the power to preach their thoughts and opinions for themselves from a one-point perspective. Some simply are incapable of not having the capacity to realize other points of view. Perspective becomes an internal agenda that follows a preexisting path of selfishness. I wanted life to be as if I were seeing it through society at large, something more than just my own self image. Perhaps my dreamscape was simply a fantasy of realism in proportion to the growing house of humanistic ideals as the world was building upon it's own egotistical foundation.

EGO! It's a word that originated from primitive Germany, based on selfish thoughts of the id in society at large. Yes, our ego drives and manipulates our path in life. We must become greater than the id source to prove our worthiness. Our ego will challenge our beliefs against the approval of society. When we become denied of the very things we believe in, our ego becomes tarnished as a result, losing a sense of willpower as our aspirations go down the drain towards a self-destructive septic tank of discarded

waste. Coming to terms with realistic expectations enables us to make honest decisions for ourselves. Much of mankind's failure is internal, a result of conflict within our own mindset about who we are and where we can go in life. Not only must we find a way to overcome barriers, there are crossroads or altered courses of direction in which we must make choices along our route of happiness.

The id identity often suffers upon reflection from choices made from the detours that twisted the mental projection of our self image. The perspective becomes a distortion of reality.

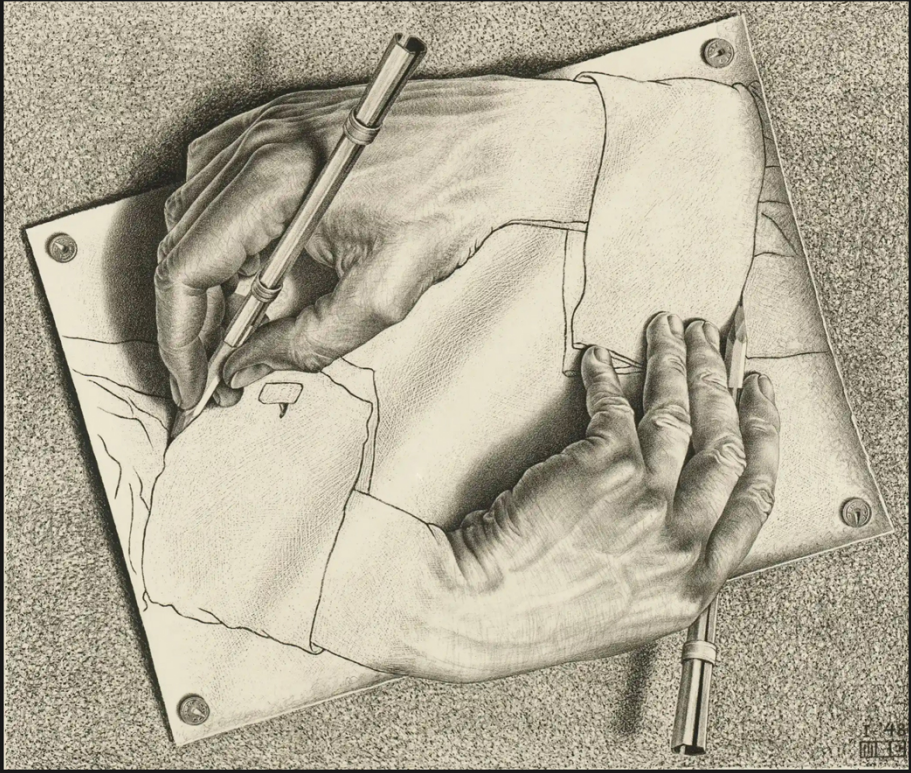
My brain was working through the compromises and resolutions of decisions I would need to make to get to where I wanted to be in life. I changed course with the best intentions to satisfy my own needs that would also become beneficial in the bigger picture. Life and circumstance intertwine with steps taken towards clarity of vision of future ambition. My own mind was in the flux-capacitor back to the future in time as I was attempting to redirect my past. I had already taken too many steps in my chosen direction. Was it too late to change that now?

Dreaming beyond my imagination, I could travel back in time to alter my own course of thoughts to penetrate inceptions of my own thoughts. What was I thinking back then? I no longer had those ambitions and would completely have completely changed my course of actions. Yes, I can change my perspective and dream up a

new reality for myself. It's my dreamscape and I can alter the past for a better future.

Another stairway suddenly opened through a hidden hallway and I took the opportunity to see what new direction it could lead. I had been on course to failure and needed guidance. The steps before me appeared in dramatic fashion as if the way was intentional and there were forces of magnitude driving my selfish desires towards something else with more potential.

Was this a crossroad decision of truth for myself or simply a deceptive device to lead me down a pathway of regret? I hesitated. I really needed an application from some device of technology to lead me to where I wanted to go in life. The trouble with technology is that it becomes a platform of dependency in that you no longer need to utilize your own mind to generate innovative thoughts. The ghost in the machine does it all for you. I returned to the dream-state only to realize nothing had changed from my past. The latest iPhone with the clock and all the upgrades couldn't change my past.



“Drawing Hands” MC Escher, 1948

My brain was actively running through my deepest concerns to help enlighten the path set before me. It was all strangely familiar, yet I did not recognize specifics. I was looking for something, but could not remember. Maybe I was just looking for answers. For all my imagination and efforts of perceptive correction, I could not change the optical illusion of my past existence. I could only move forward as a result. How many times must we fail until we find the path of acceptance? Life seemed to have become a persistence of memory in a maze of confusion.

I had convinced myself the dream was now a symbolic interpretation of regret, circumstances, and missed opportunities. The need for me to go back and change my distant past had led me astray. It seemed more relevant to rearrange my steps for future development. I continued forward with the faith and knowledge that I was being spiritually guided through experience. It was a disconcerting idea that I could not alter time, bend reality, nor change the past even in my dream. It was an unrealistic expectation, even in a fantastic state of mind. I would need to make better choices in directions.

My dream began to turn more abstract in an effort to distance my thought patterns from reality to a more distorted level of observation. It was the only solution to get past the barriers and empty spaces that had impeded my progression. A portal staircase suddenly twisted and turned from an unexpected dimensional plane without rhyme or

reason. Irrationality began to create opportunities in a world that was evolving without rules and boundaries. I had to question myself if this was coincidence or if I was being guided from unknown spirits through a world I had yet to fully discover. It was if I had become an expected guest in a world of illusions as I peeked inside before fully committing myself. I was looking intently for something and placed my finger again to my chin wondering what it could be.

“I’ll know it when I see it.”

On instinct alone, I followed the staircase upwards to a new level that had been created in my mind. It seemed to be an endless storage area to my memory warehouse. There were random items obstructing a clear path forward. I tossed and turned in my sleep as the direction wasn’t clearly visible. I began dodging antique furniture in much need of repair and random retrospective objects no longer relevant in modern society until I almost tripped over an old traveling trunk that contained numerous encyclopedias. The stacked books of knowledge began to fall all around me as it was reflective of lost interpretations of facts that had once been prominent for discovery for curious minds, yet no longer had relevance. My sourcebooks for discovery had fallen as the age of information through technology began to rise. It was a symbolic interpretation of not only

my own experience, but that of the evolutionary changes happening within society at large. Retrospective novels were now materialistic items to be discarded as there was no longer a need to occupy so much space in a world that was becoming more microscopic, yet having the potential for a rapid download of information.

Advanced technology had led to progressive comforts in society, yet I needed to find a destination with objects and instruments that had more relevance in the modern world. My dreamscape became an attic of all the things that had been created from a time that no longer existed. My mood saddened to see all the remains of the past collecting dust, yet inspired believing they existed at a time of glory.

Glory is fleeting and eventually cycles through the phases from prominence to contentment for all eternity as it eventually becomes a monument or trophy for some achievement from a specific place in time. Time defeats glorification eventually through nature's evolutionary progression. What was once so accomplished and revered becomes a collective trinket in the memory warehouse of nostalgia.

I finally made my way through all the props of life's existence when I realized I was backstage in a dramatic theatre. The curtains opened up for me as empty seats waited for the next performance. It was a lonely place to be standing in front of a non-existing audience to put on my

best performance. Perhaps I should wait for the crowd to gather.

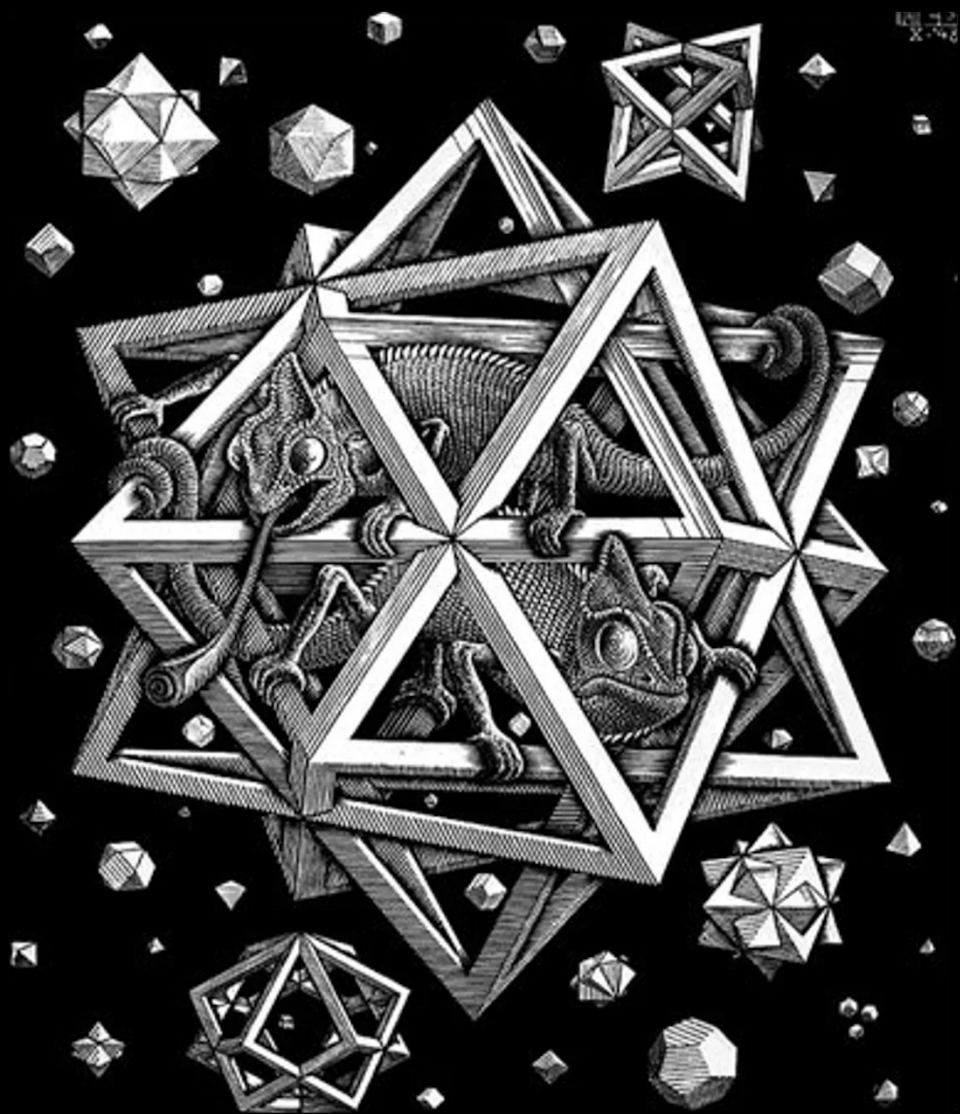
“All the world’s a stage,” I thought. “We are each another’s audience waiting for applause, gratification, and an appreciation for the part we play in life.” That was my current perspective. Nobody is above me and no one is beneath me. We are all acting together on the same stage simply playing different roles.

Life needs entertaining reflections of the very nature of human existence. Creativity comes full circle when art and drama becomes a performance that so inspires an audience. Yet, I was alone onstage ready to play my part with none to see. Where was anyone? There were no supporting actors either. I guess I would need to perform alone without an audience to witness. After all, the show must go on.

I was brilliant! I gave myself a pat on my own back for my efforts from a lack of applause. Nobody clapped. There simply was no appreciation for the achievements of my onstage performance. There was no glory, no trophy, no star embedded for people to walk over. I bowed to my own imagination as the curtains closed and walked backstage again. It was a sensational loneliness, if there could be no other way to describe my emotions. Drama can overwhelm the soul.

Suddenly, one of the props began to clap. It was a clown backstage that was malfunctioning as the batteries to

his motions had just enough energy to suddenly spark a last remaining current. Whether this was a sign of appreciation or a sarcastic gesture of effort, I will never know. It's difficult to interpret the true intentions of others. It didn't really matter to me as I was playing the leading role of my own self and was performing as if only I could play my part in life. At least the clown clapped.



“Stars” MC Escher, 1948

Imagination is the spark that fires the cylinders turning the machines of creativity. That is probably not a good analogy as the conceptual mindset is not an assembly line of production. Inspiration generates ideas of possibility that can only become realized through ambition, persistence, and force of willpower in action to manifest a tangible product of innovation.

Another staircase opened as I had been through enough drama and theatrics for the moment. I suddenly turned upwards to rise above the symbolism of my own vision to advance to a higher level. Although I was moving up, I had a strange sense that I was simply walking through life without truly making progress. The stairs eventually led to a long hallway of memorabilia. There were so many familiar items and images on the walls as if it were a personal retrospective gallery from my own life.

“How strange,” I thought in my observations from canvas structures containing details from my own past. It could only be a dream as such in that I could be on display for others to admire. It was as if I were now walking through my own Hall of Memories as if it were art.

Memories can be a form of art. They inspire us just the same as a Rembrandt painting. I was either reflecting upon nostalgic experiences to inspire my future direction or living in the past. I wasn't exactly sure about my mindset, but memories and reflections of the past often help to build for the future. I felt comfortable with what I had learned

and maybe this exhibition was a simple reminder to always remember the things you've learned along the way of life's journey. Making the same mistakes over and over can loop the system of *deja vu* all over again. That's French for a never-ending struggle of confusion within the mind.

There's good time memories and bad ones. They're simply pictures of the mind for evaluation and critique. I once had an art professor tell me my work was a compelling study. I asked, "When does it become art?"

"Never" was the reply.

I think there is truth in that art and life share similarities by which there is no such thing as a masterpiece. The canvas can capture a moment in time for the present, but there is always room for improvement. Composition, color palette, juxtaposition of elements, and visceral appeal are always a consideration for further improvement. I think my professor was right in that our work never becomes a masterpiece. It is simply a study from within our own vision during a moment in time.

The walls of my Hall of Fame {and Shame} seemed to drag on forever. Those masterpieces of life I once thought to be worthy could've used more refinement, yet I looked upon my own life's work of creativity with a sense of criticism in that I could've done better. I guess an artist is never truly satisfied with his own perspective. Looking at my own self images through a lifetime of changes made me

think about time in relationship to mental projections of aspirations that had changed course through the years.

My own priorities and needs had developed new agendas as I began to see other perspectives. My self image continued to change as I took on new challenges. Life and circumstance had grown more prominent in my mind with deeper meaning than what had once appeared on the surface level. Each memory carried something of value in my mind's association of the things, events, and relationships of the past. Many of those images had become distorted through time. From drawings of childlike innocence to realistic landscapes to conceptual idealism to abstraction...my artistic expressions had simply been a reflection of nature taking it's own course.

Changes are a force of evolution and our adaptations through the course of maturation becomes a mental transition to redirect our ambitions with an agenda considering a more meaningful attempt to create a self image that will distinguish between achievement and fulfillment for a cause. Our choices are made primarily within the context of how we can take advantage of opportunities that benefit our survival. We must choose to adapt to the bigger picture or become extinct in a world that doesn't conform to our own perspective. Human nature is self-absorbent and that is why it becomes difficult to sacrifice the self image to satisfy the needs of the many.

“What’s wrong with this picture?” I often ask myself as I attempt to understand some deeper meaning to my own resilience to changes. It’s an evolutionary measure of complacency that satisfies our goals and agendas of achievement in which we no longer have the ambition to pursue further. Constantly challenged by the very steps we take, time and circumstance become inevitable forces, often unforeseen, that put us on an alternate path. Thus, change becomes a reevaluation of priorities and often demands looking at life through a different perspective accordingly.

Perhaps a better question to ask of myself would be “What’s right with this picture?”

I tossed and turned in my sleep. Life decisions through the dreamscapes of fantasy can often lead to frustration. Needing a reality check, I took a right turn down a hallway that I trusted to be more rational and compatible with my own logic. It seemed to lead me out of the madness from my past, so I took it with full confidence.

Well-educated on a sophisticated level of craftsmanship and expertise, I had become a victim of my own success. My efforts were not fully acknowledged and my contributions did not appear to be appreciated by those who made a profit from my efforts, so my ambitious mind began to lead me down the road of insecurity. I began to feel worthless and no longer productive to society at large. Time had caught up with me as I desperately began to walk a more rapid pace.

Where was I going in such a hurry? Was I simply trying to outdistance myself from my past in an attempt to escape from my own mind, or was I in a quick transition to something else altogether? I wasn't sure of my actions as my reflexes were carrying all the weight of my mental confusion.

The hallway led to another set of stairs. As I began to climb I noticed shadows in the empty spaces changing shapes and forms. The reflection of emptiness stared at me with grotesque suspicion. I sensed fear within myself. The stairs themselves began to revolve around a central axis, taking me to where I did not want to go. I was on the defensive. I would need to stand up to the shadows that were steering me away from what I believed to be the right course.

Insecurity is your own emotional trainer to get you through life's challenges to overcome your fears. The ego's inner thoughts are in constant conflict with logic and reason, not to mention the spiritual faith associated with choices of direction that are believed to provide strength of mind, for the soul purpose of providing a platform of learning how to overcome those obstacles that seem impenetrable...our fears.

Primal fears have been engrained within the mindset of humanity since creation. It is an inner sense, or gut instinct that exists as a decisive controlling authority against our ego. Gut Instinct may have no reasoning as it

may be of a spiritual nature and helping to guide your inner fears to overcome those insecurities, yet there is a balance within the mind as to which controlling agent is given authority. Therein lies the debate. Gut instinct or rational thought.

The shadows began to morph and dissolve into other shapes and transition from ambiguity to more recognizable entities without form or function. They appeared to be monsters without clarity obstructing my path in life. I could only watch in hopes that they would dissipate into the darkness. The light from below suddenly vanished and the shadows disappeared. I was alone in the dark not knowing what direction I was taking.

My steps led downwards through a dark corridor. Perhaps I was simply looking for answers to combat my fears. I wasn't really sure as nothing really made sense anymore. I likened to think this was a deviation as I took steps less travelled that would give me insight discovering hidden truths that the path of least-resistance had no answers.

I needed a deeper understanding of truth...the full truth. Deception is a clever ambassador to Truth's democracy and can easily manipulate a preconceived agenda. The truth without conviction is simply a Lie and can oftentimes confuse the mind. Lies are a cancer to the soul and lead to the destruction of trust. Once there is no longer trust, the mind no longer gives credit towards such a

deceptive agenda. Perhaps we are all in search of the truth as we make our choices and walk in different directions wearing different shoes that encompass a society at large. Maybe the truth has more to do with an entire community as a whole rather than one's self evaluation.

I discovered another secret passageway through another portal within the corridors of virtual reality. My dreamscape projected my self as a digital avatar lost in the matrix of confusion in an attempt to see beyond the grand illusion.

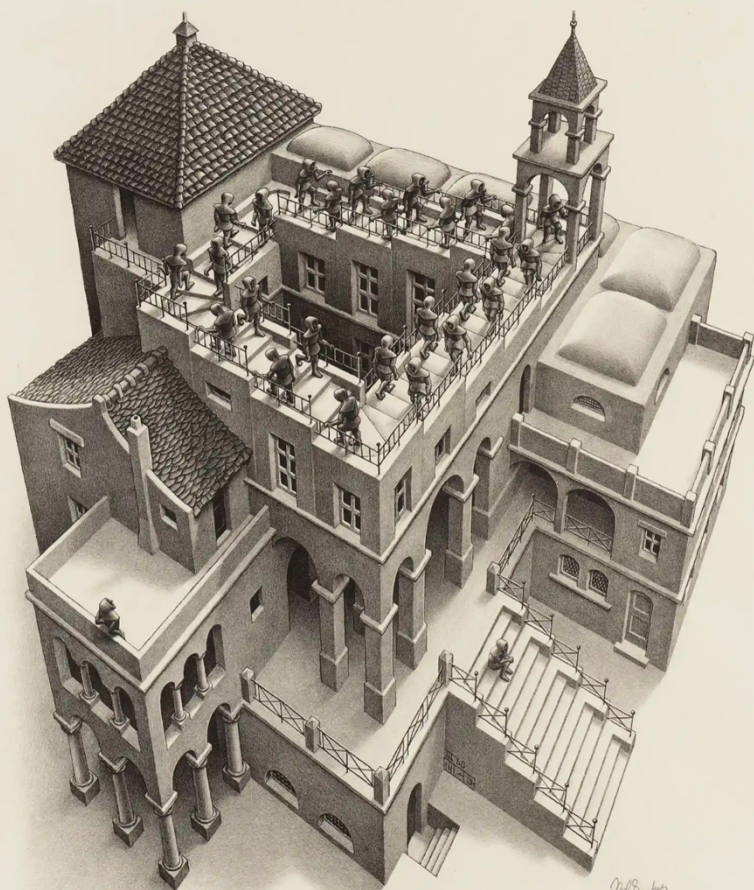
"Should I take the blue pill or the red?" I began to laugh aloud in my sleep. My unconscious mind was working overtime as my physical presence was laid to rest. Dreams are our best source for guidance in that they lead us through the confusion in pursuit of happiness. My laughter was not simply a result of connecting the pixel-point relationship between "The Matrix" movie and my own dilemma, but rather the choices I would need to make in life that would become the most beneficial. Choosing ignorance versus the truth is bliss. It is also the path of least resistance. I wanted the pill that would give me the truth, and my laughter was the resulting self-evaluation of trusting in accepted beliefs in which I could not distinguish colors in a world of deception.

The negativity of my dreamscape was a paradigm shift of perspective as I had always felt I was creating my own self-image in a world of confusion that clearly needed

to be defined. It was not an easy assessment of acceptance in that there are forces beyond our control that discriminate against those with the freedoms of perspective. The demons of reality fight against those with dreams and create nightmares in the mind as a means to destroy the optimism of ideas with possibilities.

In reality, I had been sweating profusely in the comfort of my own bed. Why was I afraid? The sweat was a baptism of consciousness as I felt a thirst and wandered down the hall into the kitchen for a glass of water. The H₂O had taken excessive adrenaline and transformed the chemical properties of my primal fears into a pool of waste. The water quenched my thirst and provided physical relief to my physical form, but had not given clarity to my mind. Water was not what I was really looking for. I was looking for something else. I just couldn't see it.

“What am I looking for?” I wondered.



“Ascending and Descending” MC Escher, 1960

I had been down that dark path of negativity and was determined to get back on track and force my way into optimism. I needed to lighten my spirits. I returned to my dream as the stairs finally coordinated their rotation in the direction I wanted to take. The light penetrated through the mist as the shadows had become still-life blankets that loomed and hovered all around as if to entice those with fears to cover themselves from reality.

My dreamscape led me through a maze of uncertainty as I began to become more convinced that I was getting closer to the truth. Perhaps that was what I had been looking for all along as we all want the truth to be revealed to make better choices for ourselves and to avoid deception. That is wisdom in a nutshell.

Wisdom comes from a sense of self-assertiveness and an understanding of the whole truth. Not to be confused with intelligence, although the two are intertwined with many similarities, Wisdom is the ability to assess all factors involved in regards to a variety of circumstances to make a clear decision. It differs from intelligence in that there are those with a high-level degree of understanding, yet are ignorant of common principles. Ignorance is a stubborn mindset in which there can be only one viewpoint. Wisdom considers solutions from various perspectives.

I found comfort within my own concerns as I now walked without necessarily caring where my path would lead or if my next steps would take me off course. Perhaps my dreamscape was simply a metaphoric analogy to life in that I was now seeking answers without contemplating a final analysis of judgment. I had struggled enough with my own inner turmoil and had reached a level in which I no longer dwelled on negativity. I began to climb upwards through well-lit staircases that showed the shadows of my steps behind me as I stepped towards the light.

The stairs led to a small room with a window to the stars. It was an illumination from a galaxy of lights that were so distant in the universe that it was unimaginable how those forces could light such a place of insignificance. I looked around the room and finally realized it was a small restaurant with a single table for two. I decided to take a seat. The stars began to swirl in my mind as I dreamed the girl of my dreams would suddenly appear. I bought her a drink and lifted my glass against empty air. As romantic as the setting had been created in my mind, I was still waiting to be served.

My fantasies were taking liberties with my inner desires of love's ambition. Love conquers all, as I'm reminded in my dreamscape. Was I looking for love, or had I simply been placed in the time and place circumstance provides opportunity? It was difficult to tell as my idealistic

dream girl had not yet appeared. What was she waiting for? Furthermore, where's the waiter? I was simply waiting.

Relationships. Partners. Soul mates. Those who are willing to walk along with you on your journey together through life are truly special. It is a supportive measure that helps to build for the future. Patience is a virtue, but I am not one to be kept waiting for others. Knowing all things are relative, I looked across the table of my imagination to an empty seat and drank thin air to the emptiness of my soul's desire. No one was there with me in the midst of my romantic moment. Not even the waitress.

I turned my head and looked again through the windows to the universe as all the brilliant stars illuminated the room. I wondered if I had the same effect on them. Could the stars see the lights from within my own desires? I wondered if there was someone else out there in the universe gazing at the stars and wondering the same.

"How insignificant am I in a universe full of galaxies with infinite stars, planetary systems, and supernovas?" The steps and directions I had taken in life were based on my hypothesis of self-assertion in an ever-changing world always in motion. I gazed once through the windows to the stars

Relationships share a common bond of perspective. Love has nothing to do with calculation, scientific theory, or chemical composition. There are no set rules, and that is what sets it apart. It cannot be measured, nor proven in a

court of law, or diagnosed through a set of experiments. Yet, nothing else matters when desire and devotion dominate the soul.

Most relationships are based on need and sacrifice. It's a two-way street of give and take. Sharing and compromise are the most relevant factors involved as there becomes a symbiotic reciprocity to each other's needs. It's a beautiful thing that reinforces the ego in that there is another to share the glory as much as the burden.

The stars began to diminish as I began to think about my relationships from the past. No longer shining with much intensity, they were simply based on the needs of others. I didn't mind the sacrifices I had taken until it became clear my needs weren't given the same consideration. I guess luck is an element of true love. From my perspective, It's better to be lucky than compromising the truth as a stack of playing cards began to fall apart in my dreamscape through the magic of illusion.

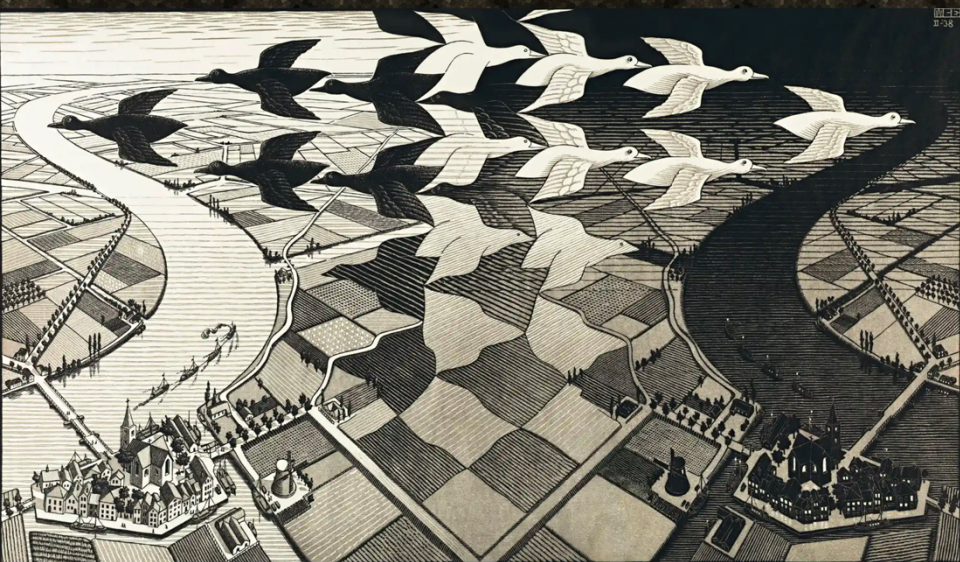
My dream was taking me on an emotional voyage of self discovery. I concluded that I wasn't leading myself so much towards an ambitious destination as much as I was trying to escape the battles within my own self image. My vision had been blurred by my own ignorance and I could not see with clarity. I began to focus on positive aspects and small details of interest. I was desperately looking for something, but simply could not remember what it was.

“What am I looking for?”

I found myself running out on a field of battle wielding a sword as if I were an ancient warrior fighting against those in opposition to my ambitions of conquering humanity. It was a battle in my own mind to discover myself within. I was naive to think I could find the true answers to questions without factual evidence. I held my sword high to quickly defend myself from anyone who dared to strike against me. As I loosened my muscles and threw down my sword, my own head began to roll along the field of battle. I quickly put my hands to my neck to ensure I was still intact.

It was then I began to stir from a deep REM state of sleep from my dreamscape. I had been fighting a battle within my own self. I was my own worst enemy and I needed to defeat myself...or at least come to the realization that anything was possible as long as I had something more than my own selfish ambitions. There was an inner passion for me to continue my journey of discovery to gain the knowledge for myself to help humanity at large. It may have been more than just a passion as it became an obsession.

In my dream I was suddenly transported at light speed to a distant galaxy and landed on an unstable planet without solid ground. I was no longer living within Earth's gravitational pull as I seemed to float in space.



“Day and Night” MC Escher, 1938

“What is happening to me?” I wondered. “How did I get here?” There must be some scientific explanation to resolve my circumstance. The air was much heavier and it became difficult to breath. I bounced off a heavy rock and landed on my ribs against some flying contraption in a murky substance similar to quicksand. I was sinking along with the machine.

As my mind began to panic, I suddenly came to my senses in that the only escape would need to come from within my own actions to salvage the ship and reassert my own footing to lift off from the sinking sensations that were pulling me downwards. Miraculously, the computer module was still active and speaking to me with advanced technology to help me navigate the system away from self-destruction and allowed me to escape another nightmare.

My dreams could take my fantasies in any direction I desired and I found myself flying through the universe with ease. In an attempt to answer the bigger questions in life I had discovered the simple solutions to my problems. I was now in control of myself by making my own decisions and taking my own actions without making excuses that I lived in a world with obstacles, illusions, and superficial theories of conspiracy. At least that was my interpretation as I cruised through distant galaxies to witness the wonders of universal harmony.

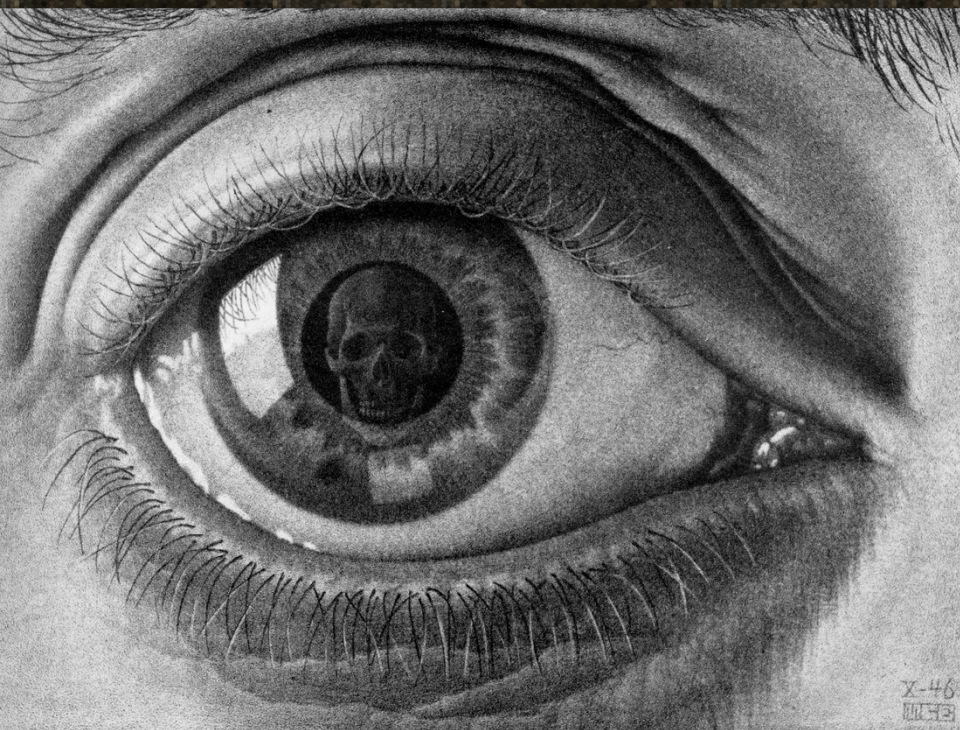
It suddenly dawned on me from my studies that the stars are evidence of creation. What are they made of, I wondered? Stars become the fusion of ideas from inspiration and begin to glow to generate light in the empty spaces of the universe. The idea develops into an ethereal substance that begins to shine brightly. The heat and pressure continues to build and develops a mass and force that becomes a gravitational pull with an impact on others. Stars are the very reflective dreams of ambition which shine upon the world.

I put the spaceship in light-speed mode to quickly return to reality. Zillions of stars zoomed through a nanosecond in time as I returned to the comfort of my bed and suddenly awoke from my dream. I got out of bed to quench my thirst with another glass of water. It replenished my body as I stepped into my studio room.

I had been inspired from my dream, but was still searching. I wanted to create something new but realized my room was unorganized and in disarray. I had avoided it for some time as I had lost my desire to take more steps towards my own ambitions.

I then stepped between the open doorway to peek inside the room. There was an air of mustiness and dust had gathered on every surface. Even the floor was unkept. There was evidence that someone had been here recently as marks of bare footprints disturbed the dust pattern. I gained the courage to follow just to see where it would lead...

The End...or just beginning!



“Eye” M.C. Escher, 1946

