

Hand with the reflecting sphere

[Environment](#), [Earth](#)



Reflection of Life Near the end of every journey of life, people will look back and reflect on past doings to judge the weight of what they feel their life was worth. For some, that reflection may be filled with feelings of accomplishment and contentment. That feeling can be for things such as settling down with a family or just simply making the most of what life has thrown at them. For others, however, the reflections may be filled with various memories of regrets stemming from things such as lost loves or an isolated lifestyle. Hand with Reflecting Globe, a picture drawn by M. C.

Escher, a famous artist, depicts an example of a life reflection, in this case, the artist himself. The concept Escher tries to express is that each spontaneous action or decision has a major influence on what can be seen in the reflection. The message being shown through this picture is that every man, woman or child who does not take full advantage of the life given to them will live only to look back on what can be described as an empty room, nothing to express emotionally and certainly nothing important enough to form any kind of attachment, however, a major element in Escher's image is power.

Power to control and change the reflection in the globe depending on the individual's choices and actions in life. The focal point of any piece of artwork is the one object that instantly grabs the audience's attention, in this case, the man, a representation of a life full of regret and delusion. The neutral expression seen on his face suggests that he holds no particular attachment to his surroundings and constantly keeping a professional front, not usually a feeling associated with one's home. Another feature that hides what the man is currently thinking is his beard.

Covering half of his face, the beard serves as a barrier between the reflection and the man's emotions, in a sense, protection from reality. The simple curve of the globe causes the man's facial features to appear as if he has a small smile on his face, perhaps because the man wants to delude himself into thinking that the life he currently leads is not as horrible as it looks. The suit being worn leads the viewer to believe that while he may have a successful career, the man puts more attention on his work than his personal life that he seems to be uncomfortable even in such an intimate setting.

His rigid posture also adds to the formality that he holds. The man sees his own home to be unfamiliar territory, stemming from the idea that he has no one to come home to, and holds no emotional attachment. Because of the lack of attachment, the man seems to be lifeless in the sense that there is a lack of movement or emotion within his body. The entire room is entirely bare of any personal belongings, such as intimate pictures, that can be usually seen littered in people's homes symbolizing loneliness.

The air in the room, like the man, seems to be completely lifeless because things seem to be firmly planted on the ground and completely still. The furniture in the room seems to be completely untouched suggesting the lack of visitors. Their positioning, however, is set up in an intimate manner, a delusion made by the man into thinking that he does not lead an entirely lonely life. Besides the lack of anyone else in the room, the windows also radiate an isolated feeling. The bars on the windows closely resemble prison bars along with no visible door suggest that there is no escape.

Prisons keep prisoners isolated from the general public as a form of punishment; the man sees that his current lifestyle is a type of punishment

because prison bars keep people in but they also keep people out, isolating him further. On the other hand, the only light source visible in the room is coming from the windows hinting towards the brighter world outside and what the man could have had instead of sitting in a darkened corner. Because of the isolation his “prison cell” provides, it only allows the man to see outside the windows and not interact with them physically causing a feeling of loneliness.

When thinking of a globe, most come to the conclusion to the model of Earth, the public’s world. In this picture, however, the globe is a symbol for a world, more specifically the man’s world. Because of the characteristics of crystal, it causes one’s reflection to be flipped upside down and no matter how much the man may try to delude himself, it is too late to completely turn his life around. Therefore, the world the man is looking into is not his future, but into his past. The clarity of the reflection suggests that the globe is made of a chrome material.

Chrome balls are hollow on the inside representing the emptiness within the man’s world. Because of the weightless quality, seen from the lack of strain in holding up the ball, the man’s world can be seen as extremely fragile and unstable. The frailty can be connected back to the man’s lack of attachments because he finds nothing important enough to weigh down and stabilize his world. Each new attachment or accomplishment made in one’s life slowly adds weight and size to the globe also making it sturdier giving it a sense of balance, something humans seek in everything they see and do.

In the man’s world, however, his lack of attachments is affecting the stability and size of his world since his world only consists of that one room. The room

is big enough for a family but only houses one, thus, bringing, a sense of loneliness and regret. Within in the globe being depicted, it shows all the flaws of a life full of isolation despite the flawless nature of the surface of the globe. The hand, as simple as it is, plays a role just as important as any of the other symbols. “ Take control into your own hands,” is a saying that is drawn quite literally in this picture because the hand is a symbol for control.

Escher is emphasizing the fact that the holder is always in control of their world based on the decisions made. The weight of someone’s world is dependent on the confidence to make words become actions and being able to prioritize the events in one’s life. Thinking of the size difference between a hand and the world is astronomical. In the picture, however, both the globe and the hand are drawn roughly the same size showing the importance of both and how much of an influence one decision can make on their reflection. Besides the globe, the hand, in reality, is the only object that is physically in the picture.

The man and the room are simply visual reflections. That small detail shows that the hand is the only controlling factor when it comes to what is being reflected and the only connection to reality. A hand to individuals is unique, just like his or her thought process. Therefore, each reflection varies person-to-person good or bad depending on their own choices. A life filled with no attachments or achievements can cause a reflection filled with emptiness and regret when they do not live their life to the fullest and take control of their life.

The regrets may come from being too absorbed in one aspect they completely ignore or forget about the other and it causes damage as time

ticks on and it starts becoming too late. Escher has drawn a piece that truly resonates in any kind of person to convey the message that the power to live life to the fullest all rests in the palms of their hands and it is up to each and every person to make the decisions that influence the accomplishments and achievements made throughout lives.

However, another message that comes through with the picture is also that the superficial world is what defines what is important today. People are more focused on making the money to live comfortably and to show off the material possessions that are owned. That drive to own material possessions has caused the neglect of the social life that leads to the lonely and depressed feeling that is personified in the picture drawn by Escher. The picture is clear, materials hold no meaning and no pull without anyone to share in the success and provide support along the way.