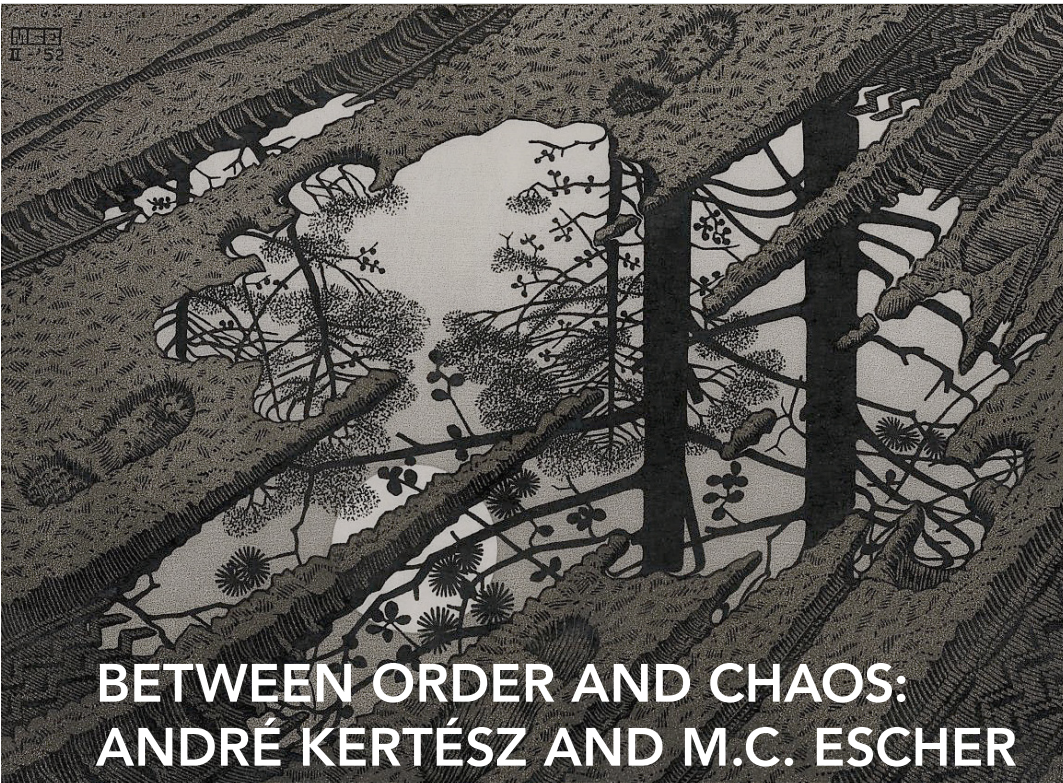


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## BETWEEN ORDER AND CHAOS: ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ AND M.C. ESCHER

M.C. Escher, *Puddle*, 1952



André Kertész, *Puddle (Empire State Building, New York)*, 1967

### OPENING RECEPTION:

JANUARY 22ND / 6PM - 8PM

### EXHIBITION DATES:

JANUARY 22 - MARCH 21, 2026

Bruce Silverstein Gallery is pleased to announce *Between Order and Chaos: André Kertész and M. C. Escher*, an exhibition that brings together two extraordinarily influential artists who each uniquely and independently redefined how visual reality is perceived. Though one worked with the camera and the other with the tools of printmaking, both artists pursued parallel investigations into perception, geometry, and illusion, treating order and chaos not as abstract opposites but as interdependent conditions through which reality is structured and transformed. The exhibition will feature a focused selection of original prints by M. C. Escher alongside vintage photographs by André Kertész spanning his eight-decade career, many of which have never before been exhibited.

Born within four years of one another, André Kertész (Budapest, 1894–New York, 1985) and M. C. Escher (Leeuwarden, 1898–Laren, 1972) each pursued independent paths apart from the dominant artistic movements of their time. Driven by deeply personal ways of seeing that resisted categorization, they approached reality as something open to reorganization and reinterpretation. Both were shaped by displacement and solitude; Kertész moved from Hungary to Paris and later to New York, while Escher traveled extensively through Italy and Spain before returning to a changed Netherlands. From these experiences emerged an outsider's point of view, enabling each to recognize the extraordinary where others might have seen the ordinary and contributing to a detached yet deeply perceptive engagement with the world.

In their work, structure is both revealed and destabilized. Through his extraordinary artistry and skillfully rendered prints, Escher isolates patterns and systems that ordinarily exist beyond human perception—ripples, reflections, recursive spaces—and renders them logical and intelligible, transforming architectural order into disorienting, impossible constructions that challenge spatial logic. In *Ripple* (1950), Escher captures a fleeting moment as ripples spread across

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a pool of water, reflecting leafless branches and a full moon, transforming motion that ordinarily escapes direct human perception into a precise, legible pattern. In *Order and Chaos* (1950), he centers a transparent geometric form—a glass sphere combined with a dodecahedron—as a momentary embodiment of order, surrounded by fractured and irregular elements that suggest disorder, making visible his belief that structure and instability are inseparable and continually give rise to one another.

Kertész, by contrast, achieves a comparable sense of visual tension in his photographs by employing unconventional vantage points, reflection, distortion, and radical cropping, demonstrating how working within physical constraint can yield a richness and complexity of vision equal to that of constructed imagery. Where Escher constructs impossible realities, Kertész extracts improbable ones, reorganizing the visible world into images that are at once precise and uncanny. In *Puddle, Empire State Building* (1967), Kertész discovers a moment where reality loosens, as reflection quietly destabilizes one of the most ordered symbols of the modern city. Deforming nude reflections from his *Distortions* series and unconventional angles from his Fifth Avenue windows find resonance with Escher's mirrored spheres, infinite staircases, and recursive spatial worlds.

Through different means, both artists challenge the stability of representation and invite viewers to question the reliability of what they see. The presence of carefully observed real-world elements is essential, as this grounding allows moments of visual disruption or improbability to register as plausible rather than purely abstract. In Escher's work, tension emerges through the collision of exacting real-world detail, strict order, and fantastical construction, generating a sense of drama and wonder. In Kertész's photographs, the same tension unfolds within lived experience, producing a quieter instability in which poetic meaning emerges from scenes that might otherwise appear ordinary.

Their influence radiated outward in distinct yet parallel ways. Escher's rigorous explorations of impossible architecture, recursion, and visual instability informed the imagination of artists, architects, filmmakers, and theorists alike; figures such as Bridget Riley, Zaha Hadid, Christopher Nolan, and Roger Penrose have acknowledged his impact on their thinking about perception, space, and paradox. Kertész's influence extended through multiple generations of image-makers, shaping the development of modern photography and the broader visual culture it helped define, as photographers including Brassai, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and Lee Friedlander recognized his influence on their understanding of composition, intuition, and the poetic possibilities of everyday life. Working through media long situated outside the traditional hierarchy of painting and sculpture, both artists helped redefine the possibilities of visual experience, demonstrating how practices once considered marginal could exert lasting influence across disciplines.

For both André Kertész and M. C. Escher, resonance emerges from the space between order and chaos, where real-world detail meets imaginative construction and visual logic gives way to uncertainty in perception. In their work, structure coexists with uncertainty as an essential condition of seeing. Viewed together, their work asks us to look again at what appears certain.

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