

Now You See It — Now You Don't . . .

20 Illusive Art Posters At Museum

By **KARL B. HILLE**
The Winchester Star

Want to know how the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum managed to squeeze yet another exhibit into their South Loudoun Street location?

It's an illusion — about 20 of them, to be exact, filling out the walls.

"We are always interested in installing new exhibits, but we ran out of room," said Exhibit Director Martha Wolfe.

The museum recently opened its permanent Illusions exhibit, featuring high-quality art posters that allow visitors to explore changing perspectives and the resulting illusions.

"This is the sort of thing we like to do because it attracts people of all ages. No matter how brilliant you are, you can't make your brain" not see some of the images, Wolfe said.

The exhibit was made possible by proceeds from a \$10,000 contribution from the Ronald McDonald House Charities and framing by neighboring Gallery One.

They consulted the "world's leading authority on illusions," Al Seckel, author of "The Great Book of Optical Illusions." Seckel's book is also available at the museum.

Some of the illusions feature impossible figures, images that suggest three dimensional tableaux that cannot be possible.



Folded Chess Set by Swiss artist Sandro Del Prete challenges the viewer to imagine the pawns and other pieces climbing ladders from one corner of the chessboard to the opposite corner.

Another example shows an elephant whose legs do not meet properly with its body.

Ambiguous figures have more than one interpretation, yet the eye sees only one at a time.

Some of the more mind-boggling of the museum's images involve relative motion: pictures that seem to move right before the eyes.

Some, like "Revolving Circles" only work when you approach or move away.

In another, egg-like images seem to rise and fall on a sky blue background any time you look at the image.

Mike Hachez, his wife Kim and girls Michelyn, 6, and Mackenzie, 3, came to see the opening.

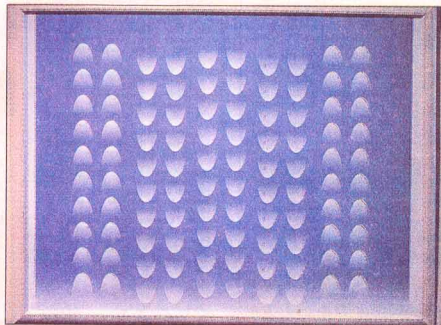
"Some of them are really psychedelic," Mike said, pointing to one with black lines radiating from a yellow disc, broken by rings of different colors. "That one is really hard for me to look at."

Museum Director Peggy McKee said many people have difficulty with that poster, even to the point of being unable to explain what is happening.

"Look straight at the yellow circle. To me it looks like the (rings) are going round and round.

"It's moving! That is awesome. I love these," said Christopher Arslan, 8, looking at the same image.

Even adults got a kick out of the exhibit.



Star Photos by Scott Mason

Kim Hachez and her daughter, Michelyn, (left) look at some of the art posters that are part of the permanent exhibit, Illusions, on display at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum on the Loudoun Street Mall. The poster pictured above gives the illusion of constant movement.

"I could spend a lot more time in here than my kid would," said Dave Smith, who brought his wife Linda and three-year-old Andy.

He said the museum itself is impressive because, like the illusions, it is open to interpretation.

"What I like about it is they don't set everything up to be done for you. You make your own fun," he said.

They also hosted Winchester Magician Phantasma for a magic show shortly after the opening.

The Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum is located at 54 S. Loudoun St., Winchester. Admission is \$5 per person and group rates are available. Admission on First Fridays is free. For information, call 722-2020.



What do you see? This is one of the art posters on display at the Illusions exhibit at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum on the Loudoun Street Mall. Various images can be seen in this poster.