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MAD Magazine Takes Over the Cincinnati Art Museum ***What, Me Worry? The Art and Humor of MAD Magazine on view*** **November 21, 2025–March 1, 2026**

CINCINNATI — August 20, 2025 —Irreverent, iconic and wildly influential, *MAD Magazine* has been making generations laugh—and think—since 1952. This fall, the Cincinnati Art Museum (CAM) invites visitors to rediscover the wit, weirdness and cultural critique that made *MAD* a publishing phenomenon in *What, Me Worry? The Art and Humor of MAD Magazine*, on view November 21, 2025, through March 1, 2026.

Organized by the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and co-curated by Stephanie Haboush Plunkett, Chief Curator and Rockwell Center Director of the Norman Rockwell Museum, and Steve Brodner, foremost satirical illustrator and caricaturist, *What, Me Worry?* traces the illustrated history of *MAD* from its subversive comic book roots to its status as a mainstream force in American satire. Featuring more than 150 original works of art, the exhibition highlights beloved recurring features, unforgettable caricatures and the artists and writers behind them—collectively known as the “Usual Gang of Idiots.”

From Spy vs. Spy to the famous Fold-Ins and Alfred E. Neuman’s ever-grinning face, *What, Me Worry?* showcases *MAD*’s signature blend of visual hilarity and sharp cultural commentary. Original illustrations and cartoons by Mort Drucker, Sergio Aragonés, Jack Davis, Al Jaffee, Richard Williams and many others will be on view alongside ephemera, artifacts, media and rare memorabilia.

“This exhibition invites visitors, many of whom are *MAD* lovers, to reminisce over the magazine’s satirical history and have a good laugh but also explore the themes and critical historical moments spoofed by *MAD*,” said Director of Learning & Interpretation Emily Agricola Holtrop, the exhibition’s curator at CAM. “Through laughter, generations have learned about important social moments that have shaped this country—*MAD* did that.”

First hitting newsstands in 1952, *MAD* originally launched as an EC comic book series founded by editor Harvey Kurtzman and publisher William Gaines, with its inaugural issue titled *Tales Calculated to Drive You Mad*. The publication’s now-legendary parodies of *Superduperman* (issue #4) and *Starchie* (issue #12)—takeoffs on the classic DC Superhero and Archie comics—launched *MAD* into the stratosphere. In 1955, with *MAD* #24, the comic was reimagined as an illustrated magazine, releasing it from the censure of the Comics Code Authority. Between 1955 and 2025, over 595 issues have been published, along with numerous of specials, books, paperbacks and compilation projects. Now part of the Warner Bros. Discovery family, managed by DC, *MAD* continues with curated reprints, compilations and some new features, and is available at Barnes & Noble’s newsstands, Bookazines or via subscription to fans nationwide.

Exhibition support provided by Fund Evaluation Group (FEG).

The exhibition will be on view in the museum’s Western & Southern galleries (Galleries 232 and 233) from November 21, 2025, through March 1, 2026. Tickets are \$12, with discounted rates for students, children, and seniors. Save \$2 when purchasing tickets online. Admission is free for museum members. The exhibition will be free for members and nonmembers every Thursday evening from 5–8 p.m. and on Friday, January 30, and February 27 from 5–9 p.m. during Art After Dark. Photography is permitted, but no flash. On social media, use the hashtag #MADATCAM.

Upcoming, related events to be announced. Visit cincinnatiartmuseum.org for the latest information.

**About the Cincinnati Art Museum**

The Cincinnati Art Museum features a diverse, encyclopedic art collection of more than 73,000 works spanning 6,000 years. In addition to displaying its own broad collection, the museum conducts extensive research and creates and organizes several exhibitions each year. It also hosts national and international traveling exhibitions. Through these critical projects and art-related programs, activities, and special events, the museum contributes to a more vibrant Cincinnati by inspiring its people and connecting its communities.

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the tens of thousands of people who give generously to the annual ArtsWave Campaign, the region's primary source for arts funding. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as its members. Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Generous support for the museum's extended Thursday hours is provided by Art Bridges Foundation's Access for All program. Exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. Accessibility accommodations are available. More information is available at cincinnatiartmuseum.org.

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