

Surrealism Art Movement: History, Characteristics, Artwork

By artchivedev_af5aaf / February 19, 2023



Surrealism is a literary, philosophical, and artistic movement from the 20th century that emphasized the poetic, the revolutionary, and the irrational while exploring the mind's inner workings. It is characterized by the: incorporation of juxtaposition; exploration of unconsciousness; dreams and fantasies and focus on the irrational. In the introduction to a play produced in 1917, the French avant-garde poet Guillaume Apollinaire coined the term "surrealist," which denotes "beyond reality." However, it was André Breton, the head of a brand-new collective of poets and creatives in Paris, who, in his Surrealist Manifesto (1924), defined surrealism as pure psychic automatism, by which one proposes to express, either verbally, in writing, or by any other manner, the actual functioning of thought. Dictation of thought in the absence of all control exercised by reason, outside of all aesthetic and moral preoccupation.

Surrealists sought to revolutionize the human experience. Surrealism strikes a balance between a life viewed rationally and one that stresses the influence of the unconscious and dreams. The movement's artists discover enchantment and unusual beauty in the unexpected, the unsettling, the outlandish, and the unorthodox. Each artist relied on

his own recurring motifs arisen through his dreams or/and unconscious mind. Their quest for independence and readiness to question imposed ideals and norms are at the heart of their work.

Surrealist painters such as Salvador Dalí, Rene Magritte, Andre Breton, Max Ernst and Joan Miro despised rationality and literary realism and were greatly inspired by psychoanalytical writings by Sigmund Freud . They believed that the logical mind suppressed the power of the imagination because taboos burdened it. They believed that the mind could highlight the inconsistencies in the real world and inspire revolution, a belief that Karl Marx also influenced. Many surrealist artists have employed automatic drawing or writing to create thoughts and images from their unconscious minds. Others wished to show latent psychological tensions or dreams capes. To create alternate realities, surrealist artists have also found inspiration in mysticism, ancient cultures, and Indigenous art and knowledge. Surrealism encompassed all the disciplines capable to produce uncanny imagery of reality and was not limited to any medium or style. It revolved around Visual Arts, Music, Theater, and Cinema. The major Surrealist art works include: The Persistance of Memory, The Great Masturbator, Philosophers Lamp, Le Beau Temps and The Son of Man.

Surrealist artists follow the Romantic tradition in emphasizing the power of the individual imagination. Still, unlike their predecessors, they thought they could find those insights in daily life and on the streets. Several succeeding movements have been affected by the Surrealists' attempt to enter the unconscious mind and their obsession with myth and primitivism. Today Surrealism is celebrated through photography, painting and sculpture, offering us an eccentric and mysterious world.

The movement's pursuit of political independence has gone hand in hand with its aspirations for the liberty of the mind and artistic expression. These artists have frequently resorted to political activity. In this way, Surrealism's support of revolutionary ideas has helped the movement come to be accepted as a way of life.

Since its inception, Surrealist concepts and artwork have been shared, welcomed, and re imagined through global networks of cooperation and trade. Surrealism's fundamental concepts and topics have been modified and deemed applicable to many historical, geographical, and cultural situations, allowing it to be conveyed via various voices. Despite the movement's widespread effect on artists worldwide, some who have assimilated into it have never agreed to be labeled as surrealists.

History of Surrealism

The surrealist movement started in 1924 and ended in the 1950s. But the Surrealist movement initially surfaced in 1924 in Paris when French poet André Breton published his "Manifesto of Surrealism," influenced by the theories and writings on the

unconscious mind by psychologist Sigmund Freud, the groundbreaking studies of Carl Jung and the early 20th-century Dada movement.

Beginnings of Surrealism- 1924

The Dada movement, also in opposition to middle-class complacency, influenced Surrealism. However, there were numerous sources from which art was influenced. Giorgio de Chirico, a contemporary of the Surrealists who, like them, employed odd imagery with unsettling juxtapositions, served as numerous of their primary sources of inspiration. They were also drawn to modernists who used primitive, naive, or fantastical imagery, such as Gustave Moreau, Arnold Bocklin, Odilon Redon, and Henri Rousseau. Even Renaissance masters like Giuseppe Arcimboldo and Hieronymous Bosch served as inspiration because they felt forced to create what Surrealists regarded as the “true,” without being excessively concerned with aesthetic concerns like line and color. The work of Sigmund Freud was profoundly influential for Surrealists, particularly his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899).

After Dada in Paris disintegrated, the Surrealism originated as a literary movement closely associated with it. Tristan Tzara’s anti-authoritarianism and André Breton’s desire to give Dada a purpose clashed. The Surrealist Manifesto, which Andre Breton penned in 1924, is sometimes referred to as the “Pope” of the Surrealist movement. However, the phrase “surrealism” was initially used by Guillaume Apollinaire in the program notes for the 1917 ballet *Parade*, written by Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, Leonide Massine, and Pablo Picasso.

Rise and Development of Surrealism- 1930s and 1940s

The Surrealists valued the prosaic photograph because it had been taken from its mundane context and given a surrealist sensibility. Incompletely detached from their original purposes, everyday snapshots, police photos, cinema stills, and documentary photos were all published in surrealist journals like *La Révolution surréaliste* and *Minotaure*.

Andre Breton’s first manifesto was published when the group started publishing *La Révolution surréaliste*. This journal was mainly devoted to writing but also featured reproductions of works by de Chirico, Ernst, André Masson, and Man Ray. The publication ran until 1929. The first surrealist exhibition was held in the same year.

In Paris, the Centrale Surréaliste, also known as the Bureau for Surrealist Research, was founded in 1924. This loosely affiliated collection of authors and artists sought to compile all the information pertinent to forms that would convey how the unconscious mind operates. They got together and interviewed people for their research. Under Andre Breton’s direction, the Bureau established two archives for material about social life and dream imagery. At least two people were required to work at the office daily—one to greet visitors and the other to note their observations and comments, which

were then added to the archive. The revolutionary purpose, signed by 27 people, including Breton, Ernst, and Masson, was published by the Bureau in January 1925.

The movement burst onto the international stage during the 1930s with major shows in Brussels, Copenhagen, London, New York and Paris. It rapidly became a worldwide popular phenomenon with branches in England, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Egypt, Denmark, Japan, the Netherlands, Romania and Hungary. Surrealism was the first artistic movement to experiment with cinema in part because it offered more opportunity than theater to create the bizarre or the unreal.

In the 1930s and 1940s, when escalating political turmoil and the Second World War stoked worries that human society was on the edge of crisis and collapse, many artists were drawn to the Surrealism movement. Many Surrealists moved to the Americas during World War II, further spreading their ideas.

The End of Surrealism – 1950s

Following World War II, the group's ideas were challenged by the rise of Existentialism, which, while also celebrating individualism, was more rationally based than Surrealism. In the arts, the Abstract Expressionists incorporated Surrealist ideas and usurped their dominance by pioneering new techniques for representing the unconscious. André Breton became increasingly interested in revolutionary political activism as the movement's primary goal. The result was the dispersal of the original movement into more minor factions of artists. The Bretonians, such as Roberto Matta, believed art was inherently political. Others, like Yves Tanguy, Max Ernst, and Dorothea Tanning, remained in America to separate from Breton. Salvador Dalí, likewise, retreated to Spain, believing in the centrality of the individual in art.

Art critics and art historians are divided on when Surrealism came to an end. Some art historians believe that Surrealism disbanded after the war. In contrast, others believe that André Breton's death in 1966 (or Salvador Dalí's death in 1989) signaled the end of Surrealism as an organized movement. Whatever the reason for its collapse, the Surrealist movement was and is still extremely popular with the general public. The Guggenheim Museum and The Met have recently had surrealist shows in New York City (1999 and 2002), and the Tate Modern in London staged a surrealist exhibition in 2001 that attracted 170,000 visitors. A sold-out performance of "La Révolution Surréaliste" at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris immediately followed this throughout Europe.

Characteristics of Surrealism Art Movement

Characteristics of Surrealist art include: Incorporation juxtaposition; Exploration of unconsciousness, Dreams and fantasies and Focus on the irrational, mythological, and mysterious.

Incorporation of juxtaposition

The Surrealists like combining bizarre ideas that aren't typically associated with one another. Some examples of their comparisons include a head to a shoe, a door to a snake, and a cup to a tree. The Surrealist group used the juxtaposition of components or images that might not initially appear to have much in common to try and compel their audience to draw new conclusions and adopt a fresh perspective.

The image below shows the aspect of association between different elements.



Exploration of unconsciousness as a true form of reality

Unconsciousness means to enter the repressed memories, our underlying unexplainable fears, and turn that potential into something creative. For two reasons, the unconscious mind piqued the Surrealists' curiosity. They were intrigued by it first since the unconscious is where the irrational comes from. Second, creativity can also come from the unconscious. The Surrealists were a collection of writers who were as interested in penetrating the levels of our conscious experience as they were in

penetrating the layers of our rational expertise. They held that the unconscious mind mostly shape our identity. Because of this, Surrealist photography and literature frequently invokes the unconscious.



Dreams and Fantasies

Dreams and fantasies are often the means through which our unconscious selves, and our irrational drives, find expression. Surrealist literature often evokes dream and fantasy worlds. Strange things happen—things that couldn't happen in reality. When we read a Surrealist poem or novel, we will often feel as though we've entered into a dream world. It's where all the fun is at. Surrealists find their inspiration from 'psychic automatism'. They seek to channel this unconscious to unlock the power of their imagination, with this imagination derived from the dreamscapes they might encounter.

The artwork below shows the characteristic of dream and fantasy in Surrealist art.



Focus on the irrational, mythological, and mysterious.

The development of rationalism, from the aftermath of World War I to that of the middle and upper classes, is reflected in the foundations of surrealism. Surrealists thought that people could only access the irrational by ignoring the irrational, a distinct domain that existed in opposition to the logical mind. Irrationality has a significant role in the Surrealist art identity. For example, a clock might suddenly start melting, a man might begin to look like an apple, or it might start to rain men.



Surrealism Artists

The major Surrealist artists included: Salvador Dalí, Rene Magritte, Andre Breton, Max Ernst and Joan Miro

Salvador Dalí



Born: 11 May 1904, Figueres, Spain

Died: 23 January 1989, Figueres, Spain

Periods: Surrealism, Cubism, Dada work, Modern art

Nationality: Spanish

Salvador Dalí is among the most well-known Surrealist and one of the most productive and varied artists of the 20th century. He is renowned for his technical skill, precise

draftsmanship, and the striking and bizarre images in his work. Though mostly recognized for his body of work as a painter, throughout his lengthy career, he also found success in the fields of sculpture, printmaking, fashion, advertising, writing, and, most notably, filmmaking through his partnerships with the most famous Surrealist filmmaker Luis Buñuel who made classic films. Along with his unquestionable technical prowess, Dalí was recognized for his flamboyant attitude and ability to play the part of a malicious provocateur. His early use of organic shapes is reminiscent of fellow Spaniards Joan Miró and Pablo Picasso. A passion for Classical and Renaissance art is also evident in his paintings, as evidenced by his hyper-realistic technique and religious iconography in his later works. His major artworks include: *Un Chien Andalou* (1927), *Great Masturbator* (1929), *The Persistence of Memory* (1931), *Archeological Reminiscence of Millet's 'Angelus'* (1933) and *The Enigma of William Tell* (1933).

Salvador Dalí agreed with the automatism idea of Surrealist André Breton. Still, he ultimately chose his self-developed method of accessing the unconscious he called "paranoiac critical," a state in which one might simulate hallucination while keeping sanity. This approach paradoxically described Dalí as a type of "irrational knowledge," that was used by his contemporaries, primarily Surrealists, in various mediums, including poetry, fashion, and film.

Salvador Dalí's efforts to create a visual language that can depict his dreams and hallucinations are supported by Freudian philosophy. These are responsible for a few of the classic and now commonplace pictures that helped Dali earn enormous recognition both during and after his lifetime. Because he was conversant with and synthesized the psychoanalytical theories of his era, obsessive themes of eroticism, religion, science, death, and decay dominated his work. Dalí's art is rich with frequently understood symbolism, ranging from fetishes and animal imagery to religious symbols, drawing on overtly autobiographical material and childhood experiences.

Salvador Dalí's open endorsement of the Francoist administration, his business dealings, and the validity and caliber of some of his later works have all drawn criticism. His life and work significantly influenced contemporary artists like Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst, as well as other Surrealists and pop artists.

Rene Magritte

Wolleh magritte, 1967.

Born: 21 November 1898 Lessines, Belgium

Died: 15 August 1967 (aged 68) Brussels, Belgium

Known for: Painter

Movement: Surrealism

René Magritte, unquestionably the most well-known Belgian artist of the 20th century, has won widespread praise for his eccentric interpretation of Surrealism. He worked as a commercial artist for many years to support himself, creating graphics for books and advertisements. This experience most certainly influenced his fine art, which frequently has the condensed impact of an advertisement. He rose to fame as the creator of several clever and thought-provoking images. His work is renowned for upending viewers' preconceived notions of reality and frequently depicts everyday objects in strange settings. His artwork has impacted pop art, minimalist art, and conceptual art. His major artworks include *Bather* (1925), *Familiar Objects* (1928), *The Treachery of Images* (1929), *The Ocean* (1933), and *The Pebble* (1948).

René Magritte aimed to develop a method that shunned the distracting aesthetic elements in most contemporary art. While several French Surrealists experimented with new methods, Magritte opted for an illustration-based approach that succinctly conveyed the ideas in his works. Magritte used repetition as a key tactic, influencing how he handled motifs inside specific images and propelling him to create numerous copies of some of his most famous pieces. He may have become interested in the concept due to Freudian psychoanalysis, which views recurrence as an indication of trauma. But it's also possible that his experience in commercial painting contributed to his decision to challenge the traditional modernist view of the original, one-of-a-kind work of art.

René Magritte's illustrations frequently produce lovely images in their purity and simplicity but also elicit disturbing feelings due to their illustrative nature. They appear to say nothing mysterious about them, yet they are also amazingly weird. Even though many of those images have the same aura of mystery as many of his surrealist works, they frequently appear to be driven more by a spirit of reasoned inquiry – and amazement – at the errors that might lurk in words.

René Magritte preferred the quiet obscurity of middle-class life, reflected by the bowler-hatted individuals who frequently appear in his paintings, to the flamboyant lives that certain French Surrealists lead. He received criticism from his colleagues for some of his tactics in later years, such as his propensity to create several copies of his artwork. Still, after his passing, his reputation has only improved. His use of text in images has drawn praise from conceptual artists, and painters of the 1980s praised some of his later work for its confrontational kitsch.

André Breton



Born: 19 February 1896 Tinchebray, France

Died: 28 September 1966 (aged 70) Paris, France

Occupation: Writer

Genre: Histories, poetry, essays

Literary movement: Surrealism

In 1924, André Breton, a founding member of the Dada group, started and led the Surrealist group. He is best recognized for being a co-founder, theorist, and leader of surrealism. In his first Surrealist Manifesto (*Manifeste du surréalisme*), published in 1924, he described surrealism as “pure psychic automatism.”

A devoted Marxist, André Breton also intended Surrealism to be a revolutionary movement capable of unleashing the minds of the masses from the rational order of society. What Breton was proposing is that artists bypass reason and rationality by accessing their unconscious. In practice, these techniques became known as automatism , which allowed artists to forgo conscious thought and embrace chance when creating art. He is best known for writing the classic novels *Nadja* and *L'Amour fou* and serving as the surrealist movement's founder. André Breton became a significant presence in French art and literature of the twentieth century due to these endeavors and his theoretical and critical work on writing. However, Breton and his followers did not altogether ignore visual art. They held high regard for artists such as Giorgio de Chirico (1888–1978), Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), Francis Picabia (1879–1953), and Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) because of the analytic, provocative, and erotic qualities of their work.

André Breton worked with various artistic mediums, concentrating on collage and printmaking, and he also wrote several books. Breton used innovative approaches to

randomly pair text and pictures to produce fresh, lyrical word-image combinations. In the 1940s, New York artists used their concepts about tapping into the unconscious and using symbols for self-expression as a fundamental philosophical cornerstone. In 1940, Breton organized the fourth International Surrealist Exhibition in Mexico City, which included the Mexicans Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) and Diego Rivera (1886–1957). The first Abstract Expressionists were exposed to ideas of automatism and spontaneous art creating through André Breton and his Surrealist exhibits in New York.

Max Ernst



Born: 2 April 1891 Brühl, German Empire

Died: 1 April 1976 (aged 84), Paris, France

Nationality: German-American-French

Known for: Painting, sculpture, poetry

Movement: Dada, Surrealism

Max Ernst was a German painter, sculptor, painter, graphic designer, and poet who became a citizen of the United States in 1948 and France in 1958. He was among the first visual artists to work with Surrealist techniques and imagery. A prolific artist, Ernst was crucial in developing the Dada and Surrealist movements in Europe. He was a provocateur, startling, and avant-garde artist who explored his psyche for outlandish imagery that parodied conventional norms. Despite lacking formal training in the arts, he invented the techniques of frottage and grattage, which reveal the imprints of the objects placed beneath the paint by scraping paint across the canvas. These techniques use pencil rubbings of textured objects and relief surfaces to create images. Recognizing that nature has the most frequent imagery he was obsessed with

birds and had a bird alter ego. His major artworks include: *Here Everything is Still Floating* (1920), *Celebes* (1921), *Ubu Imperator* (1923), *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale* (1924), *The Virgin Spanking the Christ Child Before Three Witnesses*: Andre Breton, Paul Eluard, and the Painter (1926), and *Forest and Dove* (1927).

Max Ernst was also known for creating art using unusual sketching techniques, and combining collages to create books and pamphlets. During the four years he spent serving as a soldier in World War I, he was startled, traumatized, and skeptical of contemporary society. His perception of the modern world as irrational, which served as the inspiration for his artwork, was directly influenced by these intense feelings. Max Ernst, who spent most of his life in France, was classified as an "enemy alien" during World War II; the United States government applied the same designation when Ernst arrived as a refugee.

In addition to creating a prodigious amount of Surrealist paintings, sculptures, and works on paper in his final years, Max Ernst also spent a significant amount of time playing and studying chess, which he saw as a sort of art. His explorations of the unconscious, societal commentary, and thorough experimentation with both subject and methodology have had a lasting impact.

Joan Miró



Born: 20 April 1893 Barcelona, Catalonia

Died: 25 December 1983 (aged 90) Palma, Mallorca

Nationality: Spanish

Known for: Painting, sculpture, mural and ceramics

Movement: Surrealism

Joan Miró's spectacular influence on the art world results from his long fascination with nonobjectivity and constant experimentation. His canvas served as a sandbox for his subconscious, from which an intense longing for the innocent and an expression of his Catalan pride emerged. His distinctive visual symbols, biomorphic forms, geometric patterns, and abstracted or semi-abstracted objects influenced a fiercely innovative body of work in various mediums, from ceramics and engravings to massive bronze installations. His unconventional, creative approach played a significant role in the early 20th-century Avant-garde toward growing and eventually complete abstraction. Despite being linked to early Surrealism and impacting Abstract Expressionists and Color Field painters, Miró is still one of modern art's most remarkable rebels with distinctly his visual language.

Through his surrealist landscape style inspired by Catalonia, Joan Miró created a brand-new visual environment where meticulously produced items only from the artist's imagination were placed next to simple, recognizable forms. The Abstract Expressionists would be significantly influenced by his use of internal emotion. Even though Miró reduced his shapes to pictorial signs and motions or abstract schematics, his work never fully embraced nonobjectivity. Instead, he spent his career investigating ways to undermine established representation rules. To create finished works that, due to their accuracy, seemed plausibly representational despite their high abstraction, Miró blended the spontaneity and automatism promoted by the Surrealists with detailed design and depiction.

Joan Miró frequently utilized a small palette and bold and expressive colors. Inspiring Color Field painters like Helen Frankenthaler, his chromatic studies highlighted the capacity for unblended color fields to respond to one another, and his flat backdrops with gentle color gradations were significant sources.

Modern outlaw Joan Miró wouldn't confine himself to visual experimentation in a single medium. While he continually addressed subjects like the mother and child over his lengthy career, he did it in various media, including painting, printmaking, sculpture, and ceramics, frequently with unexpected and dissimilar results. His main artworks include: Harlequin's Carnival (1924-25), Dog Barking at the Moon (1926), Dutch Interior (I) (1928), The Beautiful Bird Revealing the Unknown to a Pair of Lovers (1941), Bleu II (1961), and Pájaro lunar (Moonbird) (1966).

Surrealism Artworks

The major Surrealist art works include: The Persistence of Memory, The Great Masturbator, Philosophers Lamp, Le Beau Temps and The Son of Man.

The Persistence of Memory



Artist: Salvador Dalí

Year: 1931

Medium: Oil on canvas

Movement: Surrealism

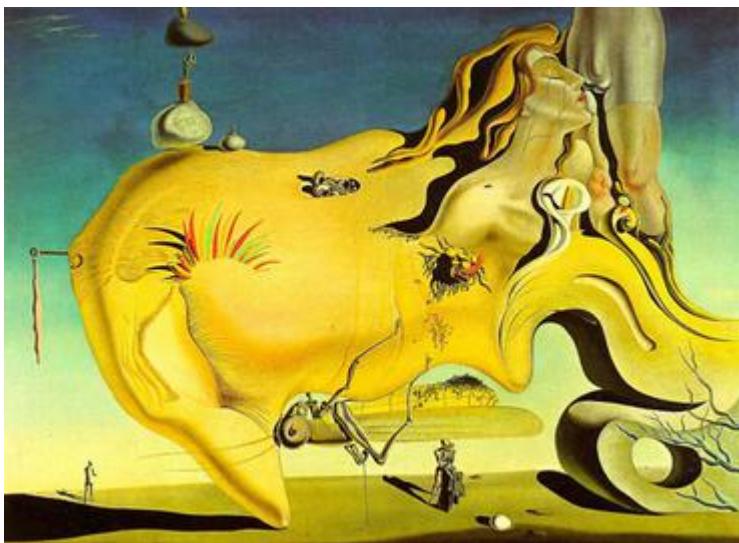
Dimensions: 24 cm × 33 cm (9.5 in × 13 in)

Location: Museum of Modern Art, New York City

Possibly Salvador Dalí's most well-known piece of art, it shows clocks, which are typically rigid things, become mysteriously limp and pliable. The creature lying across the middle of the canvas appears to be melting, sleeping, and dying all at once, as though time had physically bent. Dalí's "hand-painted dream photos" present his bizarre dreams and disturbing imagery in an astonishingly tangible and lifelike way.

This famous and frequently imitated picture by Salvador Dalí shows the flow of time as a succession of melting clocks, whose shapes Dalí attributed to a surrealist imagery of Camembert cheese melting in the sun. The dichotomy between hard and soft objects emphasizes Dalí's intention to bend reality by giving his subjects traits that reverse their typically inherent qualities. This unreality is frequently seen in our dreamscapes. They are encircled by a swarm of ants drawn to the organic putrefaction and degradation Dalí had an undying attraction for. Dalí's likeness is depicted as melting flesh in the painting's center. Therefore it is possible to interpret this work as a meditation on the artist's immortality among the jagged cliffs of his Catalan homeland.

The Great Masturbator



Artist: Salvador Dalí

Year: 1929

Medium: Oil on canvas

Movement: Surrealism

Dimensions: 110 cm × 150 cm (43.3 in × 59.1 in)

Location: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

Based on the shape of a naturally occurring rock formation at Cap de Creus along the seashore of Catalonia, the central image of the painting features a distorted human face in profile facing downwards. This could be the masturbatory fantasy implied by the title, as a naked female figure appears from the back of the skull, resembling Dalí's then-new muse, Gala. The proximity of the woman's mouth to the male crotch's skimpy clothing suggests that fellatio may occur. Only the male figure's lower body is visible, and his knees are covered in bleeding new wounds. An insect Salvador Dalí frequently mentioned in his Surrealist poetry, the grasshopper is depicted on the mouth of the creature below the center profile head. The grasshopper's abdomen and the face of the prone figure are covered with a swarm of ants, a common Dalí motif for distress.

Three further individuals are set in the landscape below, along with an egg (often used as a fertility symbol) and a few other details. The arrangement of two individuals in the landscape creates a single long shadow, while the other character is seen hastily heading into the distance on the canvas's edges. A formation of two rocks and a dry potted plant can be seen on the back of the central head figure. The plant's pot is positioned over the bottom rock, and the second rock is unnaturally balanced on top of it. The escape-from-reality concept that Dalí explores in many of his previous works is regarded to be represented by this piece.

Salvador Dalí's incredibly contradictory opinions toward intimate activity may be depicted in the painting. In order to "teach" Dalí as a young child, his father had left out a book that had graphic images of persons who had advanced, untreated diseases. Young Salvador Dalí was fascinated and appalled by the images of grotesquely deformed, diseased genitalia, and he carried this association into adulthood, associating intimate relations with putrefaction and decay. Dalí's encounter with delusional parasitosis may be the source of the grasshopper and ants crawling on the bottom of the stone head. Although the ailment was not first described until 1937, he wrote in his memoirs that he struggled with the sense of bugs crawling on his skin.

Philosophers Lamp



Artist: René Magritte

Year: 1936

Medium: Oil on canvas

Movement: Surrealism

Dimensions: 50 x 60 cm

Location: Private Collection

The Philosopher's Lamp is a self-portrait in the painting. The man in the painting looks at the viewers with rather sad eyes. His nose is painted to be much larger than the rest of his features, and he is holding a pipe in his lips, more like an elephant trunk's trunk than his nose. It is inserted deep within the pipe he is puffing. Next to him is a table with a lit candle along the length of it. The picture clarifies René Magritte's awareness of his own emotions and addiction to the viewer. By depicting the man smoking in such a way and giving the impression that he is depressed, he conveys his awareness of his addiction to pleasures (such as smoking a pipe).

The candle's form contributes to the surrealist artworks' common dreamy theme and style. It may be claimed that in the instance of Philosopher's Lamp, the candle's light represents René Magritte's philosophy. In order to see, he wants to burn the light. Unlike many other surrealists, René Magritte does not desire to spend his life in a dream. The candle serves as a reminder that, even though life is not always straightforward, one should try to see its flaws. The concept of addictions, in this instance, serves to highlight the flaws. The fact that Magritte is depicted in the painting emphasizes this point even further. He recognizes his shortcomings. He may be trying to convey his shame or regret about his inadequacies by casting a sideways glance in the audience's direction.

Le Beau Temps



Artist: Man Ray

Year: 1939

Medium: Oil on canvas

Movement: Surrealism

Dimensions: 6 feet 10 3/4 inches × 6 feet 6 3/4 inches (210.2 × 200 cm)

Location: Philadelphia Museum of Art.

In Man Ray's opinion, *Le Beau Temps* (Fair Weather) was the pinnacle of his surrealism output. Its scenes are based on the artist's nightmares about trees in his yard that were utterly barren, fighting legendary creatures on his roof, and a liaison between his maid and carpenter. Other components, like the pool table and the arithmetic book,

refer to his prior writings. The mannequin dressed as a harlequin could be some self-portrait.

The one candle at the top of the Harlequin, enclosed in glass, is charming because it symbolizes a single intelligence maintaining its flame at a difficult moment. An amorous couple in front of a picture or a mirror can be seen in silhouette on the "French" side of the painting. They have enormous, brilliantly colored, and passionate snarlers above them.

A man wearing a harlequin hat standing apart from a woman bending upwards towards him is seen in the doorway on the painting's "French" side. A pool table with a golden pathway connecting each side is also on that side.

Harlequin has shattered an egg, and it is gushing blood. Some of it has made its way to Harlequin's foot. His right arm appears to be pointing far off in the distance. Behind his head is a potential weather vane with arms of different lengths, the longer of which also points into the far distance.

This painting features a book with symbols on the "American" side and a brick wall with missing bricks that would allow escape but for two tridents that are perilously placed in front. The tridents may also be reminiscent of Shiva's trident (Trishul), as the Surrealist were masters at adopting any valid or beautiful symbol.

Fair Weather, finished right before World War II started, is also a nervous and sardonic foreshadowing of the impending global conflict. The bloody puddle and the battered stone wall are the results of fighting. Man Ray left this work in Europe in 1940 on his way back to the United States. He created a smaller version the following year out of concern that the original might be lost.

The Son of Man



Artist: René Magritte

Year: 1964

Medium: Oil on canvas

Movement: Surrealism

Dimensions: 116 cm × 89 cm (45.67 in × 35 in)

Location: Private collection

The Son of Man is both mysterious and well-liked. It is arguably one of the most instantly recognizable surrealist works. It has evolved into an iconic picture that can be seen in various media, including books, documentary photographs, Surrealist films, and television shows.

At first sight, "The Son of Man" seems reasonably straightforward; however, it is incredibly confusing. A man-shaped figure is present in front of a sea wall made of stone or concrete. The sky appears hazy and is just beginning to turn gray above the horizon line. Due to the man's left side sliding slightly into the shade and some light bouncing off of him, the viewer is given the impression that it is daytime.

The man looks out of place and overdressed in the situation. He is appropriately attired, sporting a dark grey suit, bowler hat, collar, and red tie. If the spectator looks closer, they may see that his jacket's third or bottom button is undone. The observer notices that the figure's left elbow is facing the wrong direction as they closely examine the image of the man standing stiffly with his arms at his sides.

The image's most remarkable feature is the man's face, hidden by a vivid green apple with four leaves attached. The man's left eye is barely discernible as it appears peeping through the apple's leaves. In his comments about the artwork, Magritte highlighted how he used the apple to conceal his real face and how people are naturally curious about what lies beneath the surface.

René Magritte discussed how "the visible that is present and the visible that is hidden" can clash. Magritte skillfully conveys this emotion in the painting. The inability to see the face due to the placement of the apple intrigues and irritates the viewer. The viewer must visualize the face.

The most confusing issue is undoubtedly the use of an apple. Some experts have questioned whether the painting's title, "The Son of Man," and the inclusion of the apple are both intentional allusions to Christian notions of Adam's temptation in the Garden of Eden and the fall of humanity.

Surrealism vs. Magical Realism

With the publication of "The Surrealist Manifesto" by poet and art critic André Breton in 1924, surrealism became a formalized movement in literature and art. Surrealists created this artwork to combine the conscious and subconscious realms of experience. Thus Surrealist artists would connect the realm of dreams and fiction with the world of reason and reality in creating art. The Surrealists frequently referenced the theories of Sigmund Freud, which examined the subconscious mind as a source of imagination. The Surrealist artists had some lively, somewhat discordant debates over how to access the subconscious mind and make it explicit in their artwork. Many surrealist artists used to explore automatic writing to unlock ideas and images from their unconscious minds. On the other hand, Magical Realism is an artistic movement that was first applied in the 1940s by Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier. The Magic Realists tended to examine the world through the lens of universals rather than via self-reflection and reflection. Instead of exploring the depths of the subconscious mind, they are more frequently observers of society and the natural world.

Realistic and wonderful aspects are combined in both surrealism and magic realism. The content itself was where the primary differences were. The goal of the Magic Realist is to provide us with a novel portrayal of the world we live in daily. The artist may select unexpected angles, enigmatic pairings, or everyday objects displayed in startling ways. But everything we observe is within the realm of the conceivable, if occasionally improbable. Surrealism takes us to a different, imaginary universe that only lives in our heads. It uses conventional and cutting-edge artistic approaches to show the impossible, frequently stunning us.

The lifelike effects of magic realism are produced technically through various methods. These involve utilizing glazes or turpentine to thin oil-based mediums. Otto Dix and Franz Radziwill were two visual artists who used variations of the Mixed Technique an oil painting technique that dates back to the early Renaissance. Many American Magic Realists employed the Middle Ages-era technique of egg tempera. To develop the illusion effects that are so potent in his art, Salvador Dali studied the methods of the Old Masters. However, the majority of Surrealist artists employed more modern painting techniques or even tried out brand-new ones, as was especially the case with Max Ernst. The emphasis in many Magic Realism paintings is on enhancing items within the subject matter, which aids in the creation of gripping dynamics and the reinforcement of extraordinary illusions of reality.

Surrealism vs. Dadaism

Both artistic movements began in the early 20th century. Dada's started in 1916, while Surrealism began in 1924 after the demise of Dada. Dada is an artistic movement that defied established aesthetic and cultural standards by producing works distinguished by folly, travesty, and incongruity. Dada seeks to express the workings of the

subconscious and is characterized by strange imagery and incongruous juxtaposition of subject matter. Dada gave rise to the movement known as Surrealism, which was heavily influenced by Freud's ideas about the ego, superego, and id. The major distinction between Dada and Surrealism can be seen in the influence of Freudian theories.

Both the Dada and Surrealism movements included writers, poets, and visual artists as members of a larger intellectual community. However, the Surrealist movement's artists were less experimental than those of the Dada movement. Paul Delvaux, Salvador Dalí, and René Magritte all employed classic painting methods and subverted realism by portraying dreams as though they were actual events. Nevertheless, Chance complements both movements. Dada radically used chance, submitting the artist to the absurd "rules" of chance. Dada artists were anarchic when it came to forgoing creative thought in favor of the process itself, whether throwing pieces of paper to create a collage by chance or putting together random words and re-configuring them as poetry. In contrast, many Surrealist artists used several games to approach chance from a different perspective, such as automatic writing or the exquisite corpse.

What Art Movements Were Influenced by Surrealism?

Surrealism significantly impacted Abstract Expressionism and Allan Kaprow's unscripted Happenings of the 1950s. Surrealism idea of spontaneity and an interest in exploring subconsciousness is evident in Abstract Expressionism.

Surrealist movement was crucial to the development of the feminist art movement. Female artists like Claude Cahun, Louise Bourgeois, and Meret Oppenheim explored the subordinate position of women and gender roles in society through surrealist techniques in their works.

In the 1960s, The Situationist International was also influenced by surrealist principles and concepts. With the passing of André Breton in 1966, surrealism is regarded as having come to an end. Nevertheless, the movement still serves as an inspiration to many modern artists. Artists use many surrealist images and methods, like Mary Reid Kelley, Julie Curtiss, and David Lynch, to mention a few.

More Surrealism Artwork on Artchive

Artwork Name	Artist Name	Year	Medium
Yves Tanguy	Indefinite Divisibility	1942	Oil on Canvas
Joan Miro	Catalan Landscape (The Hunter)	1923 - 1924	Oil on Canvas
Pablo Picasso	The Dance	1925	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	Time Transfixed	1938	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	The Voice of Space	1928	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	The Reckless Sleeper	1927	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	Perspective Madame Recamier by David	1949	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	The Empire of Lights	1954	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	The Discovery of Fire	1935	Oil on Panel
Salvador Dali	Hallucinogenous Bullfighter	1968 - 1970	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Dali at the Age of Six, when he Thought he was a Girl, Lifting the Skin of the Water to see a Dog Sleeping in the Shade of the Sea	1950	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Raphaelesque Head Bursting	1951	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Metamorphosis of Narcissus	1937	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Young Virgin Autosodomized by Her Own Chastity	1954	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	The Persistence of Memory	1931	Oil on Canvas

Artwork Name	Artist Name	Year	Medium
Salvador Dali	Leda atomica	1949	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Illumined Pleasures	1929	collage,Oil on Board
Salvador Dali	Meditation on the Harp	1932 - 1934	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Portrait of Paul Eluard	1929	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Slave Market with the Disappearing Bust of Voltaire	1940	Oil on Canvas
Salvador Dali	Soft Construction with Boiled Beans Premonition of Civil War	1936	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	La lunette d'approche	1963	Oil on Canvas
Rene Magritte	The Red Model II	1934	Oil on Canvas
Edward Hopper	Rooms by the Sea	1951	Oil on Canvas
Henry Moore	Reclining Figure	1939	Elmwood
Max Ernst	Blind Swimmer (Effect of a Touch)	1934	Oil on Canvas
Max Ernst	Europe After the Rain	c.1941	Oil on Canvas
Max Ernst	Pieta or Revolution by Night	1923	Oil on Canvas
Maurits Cornelis Escher	Drawing Hands	1948	Lithograph
Maurits Cornelis	Reptiles	1943	Lithograph

Artwork Name	Artist Name	Year	Medium
Escher			

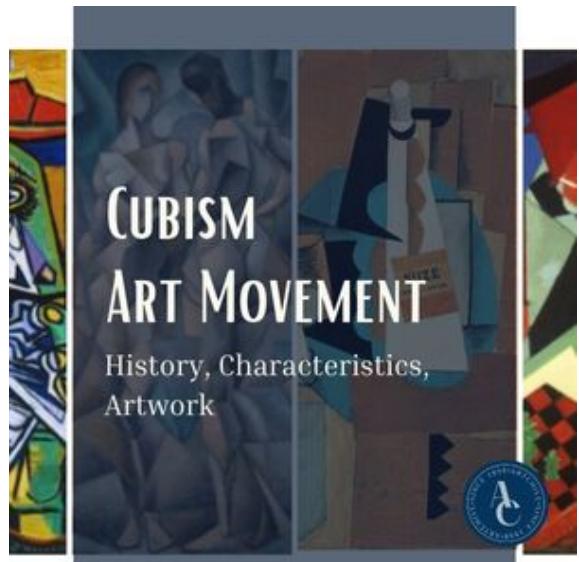
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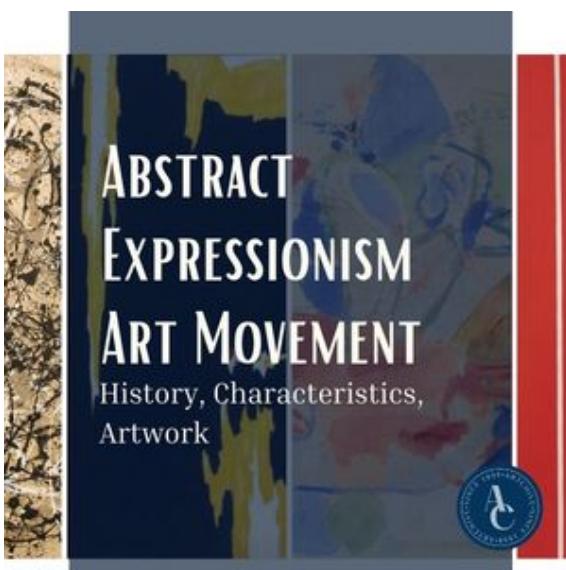
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