Dali Today: Dance and Beyond

Art and Meaning: symbols, metaphors and beyond
Middle School/High School
April 12 – June 12, 2010

Ludmilla Tcherina and Germinal Casado in Gala 1962, Ballet by Dali and Béjart
PRE-MUSEUM ACTIVITY

Surrealism is a style that features the element of surprise, dream-like, unexpected juxtapositions, and non-sequitur images. From the 1920s on, the movement spread around the globe, affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music.

Salvador Dalí (pronunciation: [da'li]) was a versatile artist from Spain, known for striking and bizarre images in his Surrealist work. His best-known painting, The Persistence of Memory, was completed in 1931. He has collaborated with a range of artists in a variety of media and is also noted for his contributions to theatre, fashion, dance, and photography. Dalí used extensive symbolism in his work. For instance, the hallmark "soft watches" that first appear in The Persistence of Memory suggest Einstein's theory that time is relative and not fixed. (see front cover) Some other themes or topics that he has explored are: dreams, monsters, cars, shoes, eggs, octopus, boats and more.

•CREATE a Surreal landscape collage using images cut out of magazines and photographs that are symbolic to you, but first . . .

•DEVELOP a sense of time of day, or an *atmospheric background choosing two different colors to create a *gradient background. Set up watercolors or tempera paint to create this effect.

•START: Dip brush and begin painting your first color from across the top of the page towards the center. Notice how the strokes get lighter and the paint fades when you get closer to the center of the page. Make sure the color is heavier at the top.

•CHOOSE another color and start from the bottom of the page up towards the center. Make sure that the color is bolder at the bottom of the page. Work quickly so that the paint does not have a chance to dry. Glide a clean, wet brush across the center of the page so that the two colors merge.

•NOTICE the gradient on this cover, it changes from pink at the top to yellow on the bottom. The gradient on this page goes from purple at the top to lavender on the bottom. Let dry.

•BRAINSTORM to identify a theme or topic for your Surreal landscape. Name three things that do not necessarily go together but can be put in a Surrealist work, for example: a plant, an umbrella, and a car. Search through international magazines for images to include, based on a concept or theme of your choice.

•CUT out some images from international newspapers and magazines, and/or photographs. When you are satisfied with their placement glue onto your gradient page to create your Surreal Landscape.

*atmosphere* - the air or climate in a specific place Intended to evoke a particular emotional tone, artistic beauty.
*gradient* - a smooth blending of shades from light to dark or from one color to another, for ex: notice how the red and blue gradient below blends where the colors meet in the center. It creates purple when they merge.
At the Museum

Salvador Dalí was a master at Surrealist imagery. He used his ability to create symbols and metaphors that challenged the perception of reality of those who viewed his work.

In the space below draw your own eye symbol based on the eyes you see in the gallery and the ones on this page. Challenge the perception of reality of those who view your art. Think about what it is you want to persuade your audience to see, think, question and feel.

Match the four eye symbols above to their names and meanings to understand what they symbolize.

2.

**REAL SURREAL**

Do your best to think the way Dalí did, to twist the realities of perception and create new meanings and ideas.

Match the four eye symbols above to their names and meanings to understand what they symbolize.

Use the eye symbols above to design and draw your own Surrealist artwork that will challenge the viewer.

Buddha Eyes: Buddhists believe that the All-Seeing eye sees everything and knows everything. Its gaze will enlighten all.

Egyptian Eye - The Eye of Horus was believed to have protective power and the power to heal. It was used as a protective amulet, and as a medical measuring device. The symbol represents the power of illumination.

Masonic Eye - Eye of Providence - The Masonic Eye is all-seeing. It is found on American money and modern pharmaceutical symbols, which descend from the Egyptian Eye of Horus. This eye is shown surrounded by rays of light and usually enclosed in a triangle.

Hamsa Hand Eye - is a Middle Eastern and Eastern Indian symbol dating from the prehistoric times as a good luck charm.

Egyptian Eye - The Eye of Horus was believed to have protective power and the power to heal. It was used as a protective amulet, and as a medical measuring device. The symbol represents the power of illumination.
POST-MUSEUM ACTIVITY

Students create a mini surreal 3-D stage set out of cardboard.

Salvador Dalí is also noted for his contributions to theater as well as for his surrealist paintings. Some of his set designs were documented in black and white photographs. Think back to the rare photographs that you saw on display at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum. What if someone asked you to create a set design in the style of surrealist artist Salvador Dalí? What would you do? Now is your chance to design your own original surrealist set design and incorporate symbolic imagery using mixed media.

- Brainstorm to generate as many ideas as possible in two minutes for your set design, teacher will record responses in a thematic web on the board. Provide students with materials such as drawing paper and pencils to make three sketches for their stage set *diorama. Each sketch may vary in concept or theme.
- Students can refer to their sketches and use the design they like best, or incorporate some of the elements from each of their sketches to create a new composite drawing.
- Have students display and discuss their finished products.
- Analyze similarities between some of Dali's set designs and students own works.

Materials: cardboard/foam board to construct mini stage setting • thick masking tape • glue • photos • foam magazines • scissors • clear nylon string • clear tape • found objects • two-way tape • cotton • crayons • markers • ribbon • colored pencils • stapler

*monologue - is an extended, uninterrupted speech by a character in a drama. The character may be speaking their thoughts aloud, directly addressing a character, or speaking to the audience.
*diorama - a three-dimensional full-size or miniature model.

Dr. Amy Winter: Director and Curator, Godwin-Ternbach Museum
Dr. Rikki Asher: Director of Art Education, Secondary Education and Youth Services
S. Archetti: Graphic Design/Photography: MS in Art Education Candidate
Gene DeCicco: Graphic Design: MS in Art Education Candidate
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www.qc.cuny.edu/godwin_ternbach

*Roll up this corner of the page with a pencil, then flip back and forth to animate Ludmilla. Watch her dance! Do the same to the top left corner to animate the eye!