

Surrealism and Totalitarianism



*Soft Construction with
Boiled Beans
(Premonition of Civil
War)*

100 cm × 99 cm, oil on
canvas, 1936



“Soft Construction with Boiled Beans” (Premonition of Civil War) is located in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Dalí painted it in 1936, but there were studies found of it that dated back to 1934. Dalí made this painting to represent the horrors of the Spanish Civil War.

LET'S LOOK

- Does this image look real to you?
- Why or why not?
- What is a civil war?
- How do you think Dalí's creature reflects civil war?
- What other objects in the painting might relate to civil war?



Lesson 1: Painting the picture of War



- The Spanish Civil War began during the summer of 1936 when General Francisco Franco spearheaded a military coup against the democratically elected government of the Second Spanish Republic.
- Dalí's painting about the war "Soft construction with boiled beans" came to stand as a universal artistic outcry against the enormous brutality, destruction and suffering of wartime violence, like Picasso's Guernica.

Activity 1: “Fill in the gaps”

The aggressivedestroys itself, tearingat its own limbs, its face twisted in a **grimace** of both.....

Dalí employs his in the painting by contorting the **limbs** into an outline of a map of Spain. Though Dalí intended this painting as a comment on the, he did not openly side with the or with the In fact, the painting is one of only a few works by Dalí to deal with contemporary social or political **issues**. Unlike other Spanish modernists, including..... and, who used their art to make political statements in support of the Spanish Republic, Dalí preferred to remain Even when Dalí’s sister Ana María..... by communist soldiers **fighting** for the Republic, and Federico García Lorca, his friend from his days at the, was murdered by a fascist **firing squad**, Dalí did not take sides.

- Academy in Madrid – triumph and torture - monster – massive – horrors of the spanish Civil War – Republic – Joan Mirò – apolitical – was tortured and imprisoned - violently– paranoic-critical method – fascist regime – Pablo Picasso - violently

Grimace: smorfia, ghigno

Limbs: arti

Issues: questioni

fighting: combattente

firing squad: plotone d

esecuzione





The aggressive **monster** destroys itself, tearing **violently** at its own limbs, its face twisted in a grimace of both **triumph and torture**.

Dalí employs his '**paranoic-critical method**' in the painting by contorting the **massive** limbs into an outline of a map of Spain.

Though Dalí intended this painting as a comment on the **horrors of the Spanish Civil War**, he did not openly side with the **Republic** or

with the **fascist regime**. In fact, the painting is one of only a few works by Dalí to deal with contemporary social or political issues.

Unlike other Spanish modernists, including **Pablo Picasso** and **Joan Miró**, who used their art to make political statements in support of the Spanish Republic, Dalí preferred to remain **apolitical**. Even

when Dalí's sister Ana María **was tortured and imprisoned** by communist soldiers fighting for the Republic, and Federico García Lorca, his friend from his days at the **Academy in Madrid**, was

murdered by a fascist firing squad, Dalí did not take sides.



Lesson 2: Compare Anxious visions for anxious times

Left: Surrealism - Spanish of Civil War - 1936 - Salvador Dali

Right: Romanticism - Napoleonic wars in Spain - 1821 - Francisco Goya



Name: Saturn Devouring his Son (1819-23)

Artist: Goya (1746-1828)

Medium: Mural painting transferred to canvas

Genre: Mythological painting

Movement: Romanticism

Location: Prado Museum, Madrid

Saturn Devouring his Son, one of Goya's most horrific and unforgettable images, belongs to the series of so-called "Black Paintings."

Goya illustrates the myth of the Roman god Saturn, who, haunted by a prophecy that he would be overthrown by one of his sons, ate each of them moments after they were born. (In the end, his wife Rea hid his sixth son, Jupiter, who duly overthrew Saturn just as the prophecy had predicted.)

It's inspired by the more conventional "Saturn Devouring His Son" (1636, Prado, Madrid) by Rubens (1577-1640), the cannibalistic ferocity with which Saturn is eating his child makes it horrifyingly unique.



What does it all mean?

Is it really an allegorical picture and, if so, who does Saturn represent?

Some art experts believe that he may symbolize the autocratic Spanish state, devouring its own citizens; others interpret Saturn as the French Revolution, or even Napoleon. Goya himself left no clue as to the answer.

There have been many interpretations of the painting, the most prominent of which is that it was meant to represent the current situation in Spain. During this time, Spain was being run by the King and tyrant, Fernando VII and many wars and battles were happening across the country. Saturn could therefore be assumed to be the Spanish homeland, killing off all its children. Other critics draw a parallel between Saturn and Goya himself, who had six children, of whom only one, Xavier, survived.

Activity 2:

Look at the picture and provide the information required

- Artist and Title
- Nationality
- Date
- Art Gallery
- Measurement
- Type of painting and Art Movement
- Description



Lesson 3: Looking for Salvador Dalí (1904/1989)

Activity 3: "Gallery walks"



Figueres

Portlligat



Madrid

Paris

Castel of Pùbol



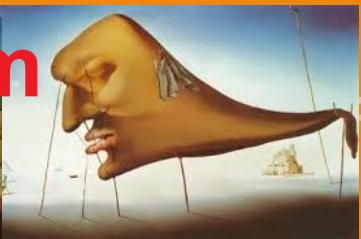
- Portlligat
- Figueres
- Castel of Púbol
- Madrid
- Paris

- Salvador Domingo Felipe Jacinto Dalí i Domènech, Marquis of Dalí de Púbol (11 May 1904 – 23 January 1989), known professionally as Salvador Dalí was a prominent Spanish surrealist born in Catalonia.
- He was educated at the School of Fine Arts, where he became a friend of Federico Garcia lorca and Luis Bunuel.
- In 1926 dalí was expelled from the Academia and the following year he met Pablo Picasso.
- Dalí and Gala rented a small fisherman's cabin. He bought the place, and over the years enlarged it by buying the neighbouring fishermen cabins, gradually building his much beloved villa by the sea.
- In 1968, Dalí had bought a old house for Gala; and starting in 1971 she would retreat there alone for weeks at a time.

Lesson 4: Surrealism



The persistence of memory (1931)



Sleep (1937)



The Anthropomorphic Cabinet



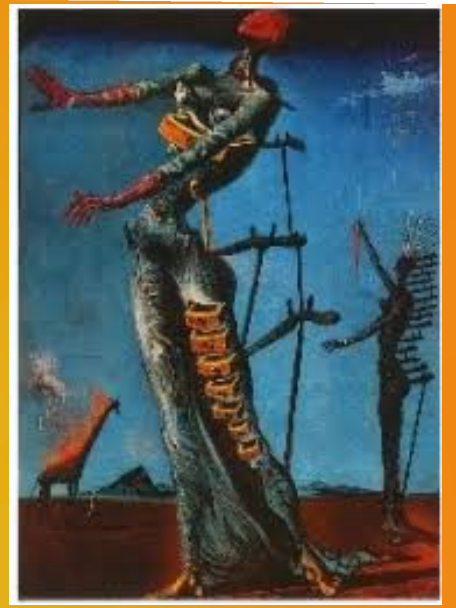
The Temptation of Saint Anthony



Swans Reflecting Elephants



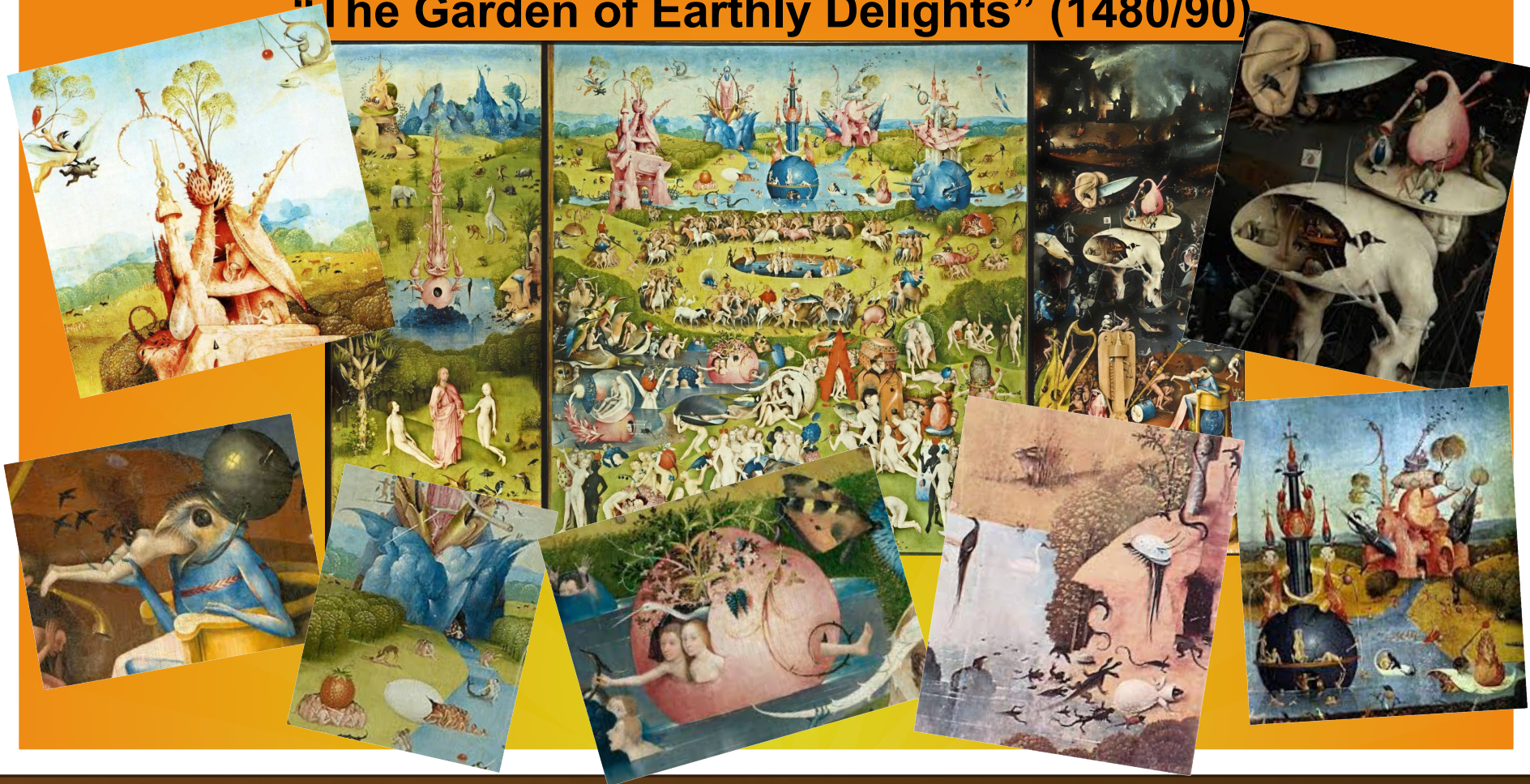
Soft Self-Portrait with Fried Bacon



The Burning Giraffe

Bosch and Surrealism

“The Garden of Earthly Delights” (1480/90)



Hieronymus Bosch (1453/1516)? Salvador Dalì (1904/1989)?

“Il grande masturbatore” (1929)

“The Garden of Earthly Delights” (1480/90)



Looking for Salvador Dalí: Gala, Dalí's Wife and Muse



Gala, Elena Ivanovna Diakonova was Russian, was born in Kazan in 1894.

After Gala died, in 1982, Dalí retreated from public life.



"Dream Caused by the Flight of a Bee around a Pomegranate a Second before Awakening" (1944)

Gala first met Dalí in 1929 during a trip to Cadaques: she follows him to Paris and begins to influence and be part of the Surrealist movement.

Gala became Dalí's business manager, negotiating prices and signing contracts on his behalf.

Activity 4: Mutual dictation

Surrealism is a cultural movement that began in the early 1920s in France, and is best known for its visual artworks and writings. Artists painted unnerving, illogical scenes with photographic precision, created strange creatures from everyday objects, and developed painting techniques that allowed the unconscious to express itself. Its aim was to "resolve the previously contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality, a super-reality".

Surrealist works feature the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions and non sequitur; however, many Surrealist artists and writers regard their work as an expression of the philosophical movement first and foremost, with the works being an artifact. Leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion that Surrealism was, above all, a revolutionary movement.

Surrealism developed out of the Dada activities during World War I and the most important center of the movement was Paris. From the 1920s onward, the movement spread around the globe, eventually affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music of many countries and languages, as well as political thought and practice, philosophy, and social theory.

Activity 4: Mutual dictation Work in pairs:

- 1) Student A reads to student B his/her part. B writes into the gaps.
- 2) Then B reads to A so that A fills the gaps

Part A

A1: Surrealism in the early 1920s in France, and is best known for its
.....

A2: Artists painted unnerving,....., created strange creatures from everyday
objects, and the unconscious to express itself.

A3: Its aim was to "of dream and reality into an absolute reality,
....."

A4: Surrealist works juxtapositions and non sequitur; however, many
Surrealist artists and writers, with the works being an
artifact.

A5:that Surrealism was, above all, a revolutionary movement.
Surrealism developed out of the Dada activities during World War I
.....

A6:, eventually affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music
of many countries and languages, as well as political

Activity 4: Mutual dictation Work in pairs:

- 1) Student A reads to student B his/her part. B writes into the gaps.
- 2) Then B reads to A so that A fills the gaps

Part B

B1: is a cultural movement that began visual artworks and writings.

B2:, illogical scenes with photographic precision, developed painting techniques that allowed

B3:..... "resolve the previously contradictory conditions a super-reality".

B4: feature the element of surprise, unexpected regard their work as an expression of the philosophical movement first and foremost,

B5: Leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion.....

.....and the most important center of the movement was Paris.

B6: From the 1920s onward, the movement spread around the globe, thought and practice, philosophy, and social theory.

Lesson 5: "Techniques and new terms" Glossary

Paranoic-critical Method: It's a surrealist technique developed by Salvador Dali in the early 1930s. He employed it in the production of painting and other artworks, especially those that involved optical illusions and other multiple images

Landscape : Paesaggio; **Canvas:** Tela

Easel: cavalletto; **Drawing:** Disegno

Painting: Pittura; **Pattern:** modello

Vibrant colour: Colore vibrante

Picture: Immagine; **Portrait:** ritratto

Self portrait: Autoritratto; **Exhibition:** Mostra

Brush: pennello; **Fragmented style:** Stile frammentato

Crutches: Stampelle; **Collection:** Collezione

Watercolour: Acquerello; **Charcoal:** carbone

Geometrical form: Forme geometriche

Snapshot: Istantanea; **Aquatint:** Acquatinta

Art Gallery: Galleria d'Arte

Grattage: Surrealist painting technique that involves laying a canvas prepared with a layer of oil paint over a textured object and then scraping the paint off to create an interesting and unexpected surface

Panel: Pannello; **Realistic style:** stile realistico

Gouache: A method of painting using opaque pigments ground in water and thickened with a glue-like substance

Skylight: lucernario; **Frame:** Cornice

Painter: Pittore; **Designer:** Progettista

Oil on canvas: Olio su tela;

Expression: Espressione; **Drawers:** cassetti

Etching: Acquaforte

Frottage: The technique of creating a design by rubbing over an object placed underneath the paper

Lithograph: A picture printed using a stone or metal block on which an image has been drawn with a thick substance that attracts ink

Activity 5 "Matching"

match the name of techniques and new terms with the correct captions

Landscape

Canvas

Easel

Drawing

Painting

Pattern

Vibrant colour

Picture

Portrait

Self-portrait

Exhibition

Brush

Fragmented style

Still-life

crutches

Collection

Watercolour

Charcoal

Geometrical form

Paranoic-critical Method

Snapshot

Aquatint

Art Gallery

Grattage

Gouache

Realistic style

Skylight

Frame

Panel

Oil on canvas

Etching

Painter

Designer

Expression

Drawers

Frottage

Lithograph

Group work:

Discuss the words and match them with the definitions

The student reads to the others a definition on the wall, then the team finds the correct label on the table to the match on the wall.

After that student change roles

Looking for Salvador Dalí

Lesson 6: Surrealist Cinema



Surrealist Cinema

“Un Chien Andalou” (an Andalusian Dog) is a 1929 silent surrealist short film by the Spanish director Luis Buñuel and artist Salvador Dalí. It was Buñuel's first film and was initially released in 1929 with a limited showing at Studio des Ursulines in Paris, but became popular and ran for eight months. The chronology of the film is disjointed, jumping from the initial "once upon a time" to "eight years later" without the events or characters changing very much. It uses dream logic in narrative flow that can be described in terms of then-popular Freudian free association, presenting a series of tenuously related scenes.

Dalí wrote:

“Surrealism is destructive, but it destroys only what it considers to be shackles limiting our vision”



**UN CHIEN
ANDALOU**

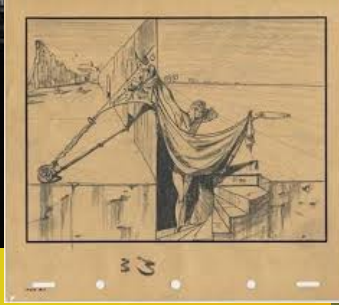
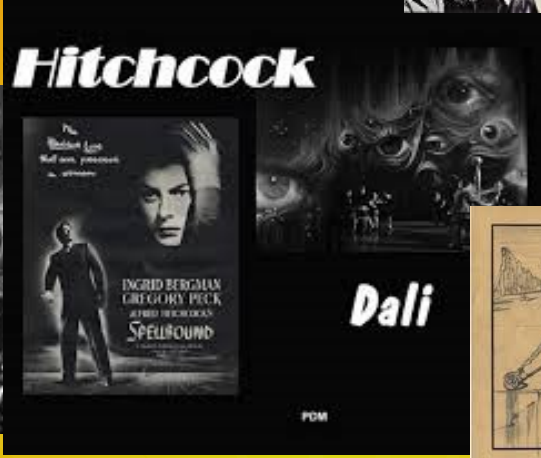


**LUIS BUNUEL
(1929)**

Starring:
Simone Mareuil, Pierre Batcheff,
Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dalí, Robert Hommel,
Marval, Fano Messan, Jaume Miravittles.



Surrealist Cinema



Activity 6 “Vocabulary”

- 1) Listen while the text is read (by the student) and number the words in order in which you hear them**
- 2) Now listen to the definitions and say which words on your list they define**
- 3) Then write in the words next to their definitions (give definitions on papers)**
- 4) Now read the text yourself (give text)**

Activity 6. Text

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Activity 6. Vocabulary

List of words and definitions

Short film

Director

Artist

Chronology

Disjointed

Jumping

Dream logic

Narrative flow

Free association destructive

Shackles

vision

Lesson 7: Dalí Theatre-Museum

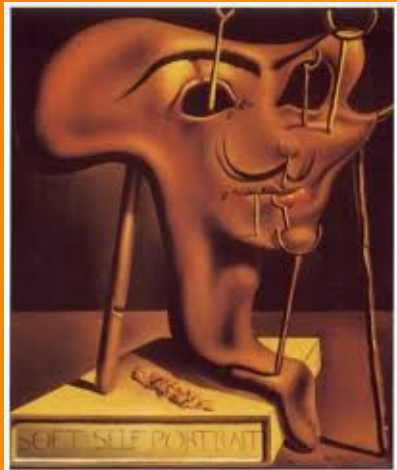
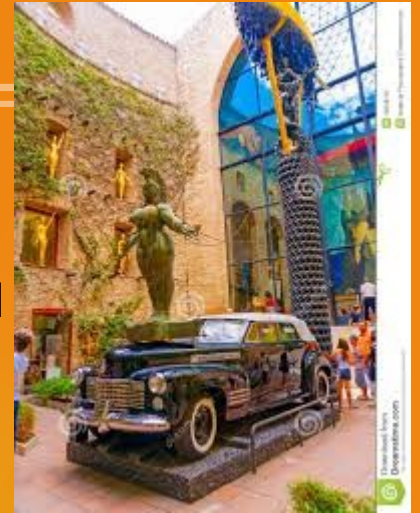




Lesson 7

Dalí Theatre and Museum

Between 1961 and 1974, Dalí converted Figueres' former municipal theatre, destroyed by a fire in 1939 at the end of the civil war, into the Teatre-Museu Dalí. It's full of illusions, tricks and the utterly unexpected, and contains a substantial portion of Dalí's life's work, though you won't find his most famous pieces here (they're scattered around the world).



Opening the show is Taxi Plujós (Rainy Taxi) an early Cadillac surmounted by statues; put a coin in the slot and water washes all over the occupant of the car. The Sala de Peixateries (Fishmongers' Hall) holds a collection of Dalí oils, including the famous Autoretrat Tou amb Tall de Bacon Fregit (Soft Self-Portrait with Fried Bacon) and Retrat de Picasso (Portrait of Picasso). Beneath the former stage of the theatre is the crypt with Dalí's plain tomb, located at what Dalí modestly described as the spiritual centre of Europe.

“Dalí Theatre-Museum” :

Look at “Dalí Theatre-Museum” and provide the information required (give the text)

- Where is it?
- When did the Museum open?
- What was it originally?
- Discover terms, verbs and expressions related to the paintings and to Surrealism



Salvador Dalì

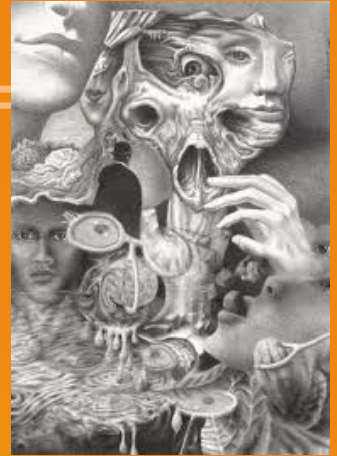
Artist's biography

- Talk about Dalì's life
- How can we define his style and his personality?
- Dalì under Franco's regime
- Surrealism between Art and Cinema
- Bunuel, Hitchcock, Walt Disney
- The Dalì Theatre-Museum





Questions about film



What is Surrealism?

Where does this name came from?

When did it develop and what were its main ideas?

Who were the main protagonists?

Choose a Dalí's art work and describe it.

Surrealism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtPBOwE0Qn0>