

CONDITIONS OF USE FOR THIS PDF

The images contained within this PDF may be used for private study, scholarship, and research only. They may not be published in print, posted on the internet, or exhibited. They may not be donated, sold, or otherwise transferred to another individual or repository without the written permission of The Museum of Modern Art Archives.

When publication is intended, publication-quality images must be obtained from SCALA Group, the Museum's agent for licensing and distribution of images to outside publishers and researchers.

If you wish to quote any of this material in a publication, an application for permission to publish must be submitted to the MoMA Archives. This stipulation also applies to dissertations and theses. All references to materials should cite the archival collection and folder, and acknowledge "The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York."

Whether publishing an image or quoting text, you are responsible for obtaining any consents or permissions which may be necessary in connection with any use of the archival materials, including, without limitation, any necessary authorizations from the copyright holder thereof or from any individual depicted therein.

In requesting and accepting this reproduction, you are agreeing to indemnify and hold harmless The Museum of Modern Art, its agents and employees against all claims, demands, costs and expenses incurred by copyright infringement or any other legal or regulatory cause of action arising from the use of this material.

NOTICE: WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

FANTASTIC ART ♦ DADA AND SURREALISM

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Collection:	Series.Folder:
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	ACG 42

MOMA
Archive
Goodyear
42

LIBRARY

Museum of Modern Art

MOMA
Archive
Goodyear
42

Binding Title: FANTASTIC ART, DADA & SURREALISM

1. Correspondence between Goodyear, Mabry and Barr over Goodyear's insisting on the removal of certain items from MOMA's traveling exhibition: FANTASTIC ART, DADA AND SURREALISM, January 1937.
2. MOMA brochure: "A Brief Guide to the Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism".
3. Illustrated newspaper publicity over gift to MOMA by Walter P. Chrysler of the rarest and most complete existing collection of literature pertaining to the Surrealist movement, November 1936.
4. MOMA's 55th exhibition: FANTASTIC ART, DADA & SURREALISM
DECEMBER 9, 1936 - JANUARY 17, 1937
A. Sample preview invitation
B. Newspaper publicity announcing upcoming show & the artists represented.
C. Illustrated newspaper & magazine coverage and critique of this controversial show.
5. Newspaper publicity over Katherine Dreier's withdrawal of her own and 16 other paintings by the Societe Anonyme from the Surrealist Exhibition's U.S. tour on the grounds that it included works by children and the insane, January 1937.
6. Preview invitation to Boston's exhibit of FANTASTIC ART, DADA & SURREALISM March 10 to April 3, 1937.

570 Lexington Avenue,
January 18th, 1937.

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Alfred:

If it had not been for your unfortunate illness, I certainly would have consulted with you in regard to the items which it seems to me should be dropped from the travelling exhibition of Fantastic Art and I would be glad to discuss the matter with you at any time if you are able to do so. My concern is only with the interests of the Museum.

Exhibition

President

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

✓ Exhibitions

570 Lexington Avenue,
January 15th, 1937.

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director,
The Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Alfred:

If it had not been for your unfortunate illness, I certainly would have consulted with you in regard to the items which it seems to me should be dropped from the travelling exhibition of Fantastic Art and I would be glad to discuss the matter with you at any time if you are able to do so. My concern is only with the interests of the Museum.

You were notified that I proposed to go over the list which you had chosen for circulation with the possibility of asking for the exclusion of such items as did not appeal to me but which you had not dropped. From the list furnished me I had understood that you had already proposed to exclude Item 224, using a photograph of it instead. I have no very strong objection to the photograph. The item to which I most strongly object is, of course, No. 452.

However, on further consideration I am inclined to think that the best solution of the matter is to leave the decision as to what articles are to be included in the Exhibition entirely in your hands, merely registering my protest against the inclusion of the articles to which I have taken exception. At the same time the object which I have had in mind can be attained in another way, of which I can advise you as soon as we can meet.

Sincerely yours,

President.

cc: TDMJr
NAR

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53rd Street, New York, N. Y.

Telephone: Circle 7-7470

Cable Address: Modernart

January 13, 1937

Trustees

President:

A. Conger Goodyear

1st Vice-President:

Nelson A. Rockefeller

2nd Vice President:

Mrs. John S. Sheppard

Treasurer:

Samuel A. Lewisohn

Cornelius N. Bliss

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss

Stephen C. Clark

Mrs. W. Murray Crane

The Lord Duveen of Millbank

Marshall Field

Edsel B. Ford

Philip Goodwin

Mrs. Charles S. Payson

Mrs. Stanley Resor

Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Beardsley Ruml

Paul J. Sachs

Edward M. M. Warburg

John Hay Whitney

Director:

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Secretary and

Executive Director:

Thomas Dabney Mabry, Jr.

Director of Film Library:

John E. Abbott

Dear Mr. Goodyear:

Mr. Mabry has told me of your visit to the Museum last Tuesday morning and of your removing from the tour of the exhibition Fantastic Art, Dada, and Surrealism, items 219, 224, 225, 324, 399, 452, 455, 467, 464. He has also shown me your letter of January 9th confirming this list.

I am very much surprised at your having insisted upon the removal of these items without having first given me a chance to explain to you why these particular items were included in the original exhibition.

The exhibition has been assembled with a great deal of care. Each item in it bears a definite relation to the whole, though naturally some items can be dispensed with more easily than others. As it happens, the items which you ordered removed are for the most part unique, and, some of them, of considerable importance historically as well as aesthetically.

I think that you will agree with me that the Museum has not in the past, except in architecture and industrial art, played the role of the pioneer in its exhibitions. It has rather shown things which have been generally accepted or which in any case are already fairly familiar to the interested public. The present exhibition is in most of its aspects no exception to this rule. Some of the items which you have censored are in fact already fifteen or twenty years old; they have been exhibited numerous times and have been reproduced in many periodicals and books.

I think that the heart of the misunderstanding lies in the fact that the exhibition has been assembled upon a Fantastic-Surrealist aesthetic rather than upon a more usually accepted aesthetic of form and technique expressed through the conventional media of painting and sculpture. A good many people will always object to any new aesthetic - and these objections will come particularly from the people who have with some difficulty already accepted the immediately previous innovations. The aesthetic of form and color and of distorted or disintegrated objects which so exasperated people in the Armory Show is now generally accepted, but the aesthetic of Surrealist fantasy, incongruity, spontaneity and humor, though it is already a dozen or twenty years old, is still exasperating to some of our friends, who are likely to call it silly or absurd (the adjectives I think have not changed since 1913).

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

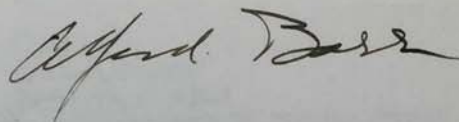
Mr. Goodyear

2

January 13, 1937

As director of the exhibition, I do not feel myself to be the final arbiter of questions of impropriety, indecency, sacrilege, or other breaches of convention which are ordinarily censored in art exhibitions, but I do consider it within my right to oppose the censorship of any object in the exhibition on the basis of artistic judgment. I therefore regret to say that I cannot agree to the arbitrary omission from the tour of the exhibition of the objects in question, all of which seem to be valid and appropriate within the frame of the exhibition. Of course, matters of principle and procedure are involved as well as the value to the exhibition of the objects themselves.

Sincerely,



A. Conger Goodyear, Esq.
570 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York

AHB:EH

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53rd Street, New York, N. Y.

Telephone: Circle 7-7470

Cable Address: Modernart

Trustees

President:

A. Conger Goodyear

1st Vice-President:

Nelson A. Rockefeller

2nd Vice Presidents:

Mrs. John S. Sheppard

Treasurer:

Samuel A. Lewisohn

Cornelius N. Bliss

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss

Stephen C. Clark

Mrs. W. Murray Crane

The Lord Duveen of Millbank

Marshall Field

Edsel B. Ford

Philip Goodwin

Mrs. Charles S. Payson

Mrs. Stanley Resor

Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Beardsley Ruml

Paul J. Sachs

Edward M. M. Warburg

John Hay Whitney

Director:

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Secretary and

Executive Director:

Thomas Dabney Mabry, Jr.

Director of Film Library:

John E. Abbott

January 8, 1937.

Dear Mr. Goodyear:

I should like to check with you the items you wish us to leave out of the traveling exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism. As I took them down from your dictation they are as follows:

- 219 - Duchamp, Pharmacy
- 224 - " Why not sneeze?
- 225 - " Monte Carlo share
- 324 - Dominguez, Peregrinations of Georges Hugnet
- 399 - Hugnet, Collage
- 452 - Oppenheim, Fur-covered cup, plate and spoon
- 455 - Paalen, The exact hour
- 467 - Ray, Theater
- 644 - Model of an enlarged cross-section of a lichen.

I sent the above list over to Alfred. After a good deal of consideration of the whole exhibition as it has been assembled for traveling Alfred has sent me word that each object in the above list has a particular meaning in regard to the exhibition and that some are quite important in it. He would therefore much prefer to keep them in the traveling exhibition although of course he would not wish to include number 644 - Model of an enlarged cross-section of a lichen - if you do not want to lend it.

Very truly yours,

Thomas Mabry

Mr. A. Conger Goodyear,
570 Lexington Avenue,
New York City.

TDM:lf

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

LIBRARY
Museum of Modern Art

MOMA
Archive
Goodyear
42

MOMA
Archive
Goodyear
42

Binding Title: FANTASTIC ART, DADA & SURREALISM

1. Correspondence between Goodyear, Mabry and Barr over Goodyear's insisting on the removal of certain items from MOMA's traveling exhibition: FANTASTIC ART, DADA AND SURREALISM, January 1937.
2. MOMA brochure: "A Brief Guide to the Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism".
3. Illustrated newspaper publicity over gift to MOMA by Walter P. Chrysler of the rarest and most complete existing collection of literature pertaining to the Surrealist movement, November 1936.
4. MOMA's 55th exhibition: FANTASTIC ART, DADA & SURREALISM
DECEMBER 9, 1936 - JANUARY 17, 1937
A. Sample preview invitation
B. Newspaper publicity announcing upcoming show & the artists represented.
C. Illustrated newspaper & magazine coverage and critique of this controversial show.
5. Newspaper publicity over Katherine Dreier's withdrawal of her own and 16 other paintings by the Societe Anonyme from the Surrealist Exhibition's U.S. tour on the grounds that it included works by children and the insane, January 1937.
6. Preview invitation to Boston's exhibit of FANTASTIC ART, DADA & SURREALISM March 10 to April 3, 1937.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series/Folder:
	ACG	42

LIBRARY

Museum of Modern Art

(Open carefully)

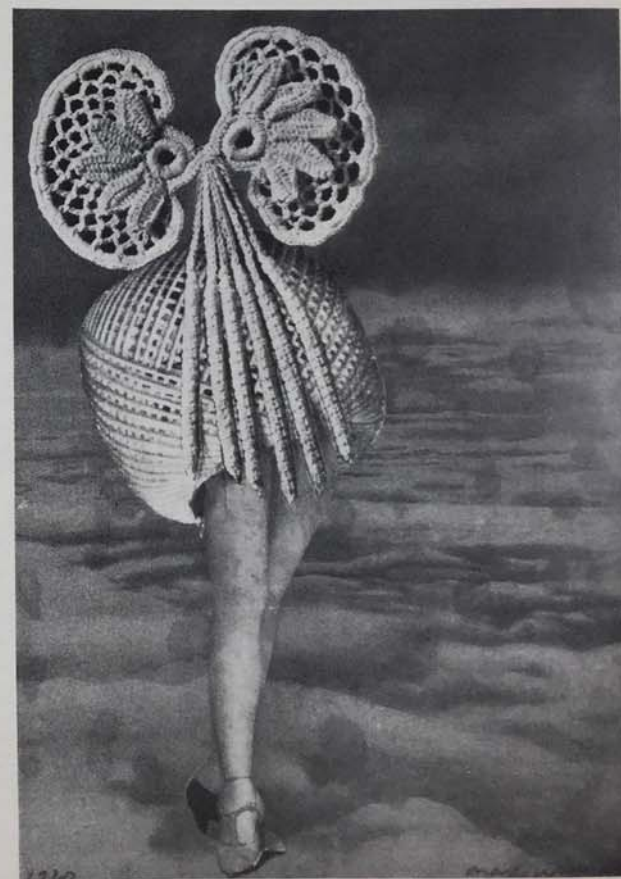
③ Letters here - dated 11/15, 1/13, & 1/2/1937

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42



**A Brief Guide to the Exhibition of
Fantastic Art Dada Surrealism**



The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	AC6	42

A Brief Guide to the Exhibition of Fantastic Art Dada Surrealism

The exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada, and Surrealism is the 55th exhibition assembled by The Museum of Modern Art and the second of a series intended to illustrate some of the principal movements of modern art in a comprehensive, objective, and historical manner. The first exhibition of the series was devoted to Cubism and Abstract Art, a movement diametrically opposed in spirit and esthetic principles to the present exhibition. In exhibiting these movements the Museum does not intend to foster any particular aspect of modern art. Its intention is, rather, to make a report to the public by offering material for study and comparison.

The explanation of the kind of art shown in this exhibition may be sought in the deep-seated and persistent interest which human beings have in the fantastic, the irrational, the spontaneous, the marvelous, the enigmatic, and the dreamlike. These qualities have always been present in the metaphors and similes of poetry but they have been less frequent in painting, which in the past was largely concerned with reproducing external reality, with decoration, or, as in some of the more advanced movements of recent years, with the composition of color and line into formal design.

Fantastic Art of the Past

Fantastic subject matter has been found in European art of all periods. The art of the middle ages, with its scenes of Hell (no. 15) and the Apocalypse, its circumstantial illustrations of holy miracles (25) and supernatural marvels (7), seems from a rational point of view to have been predominantly fantastic. Most of this subject matter was of a traditional or collective character, but the Dutch artist Bosch (10, 14, 15, 32), working at the end of the Gothic period, transformed traditional fantasy into a highly personal and original vision which links his art with that of the modern Surrealists.

During the Renaissance and the 17th century, fantastic art is to be seen principally in the art of minor men or in obscure works of great masters. Such technical devices (now used by the Surrealists) as the double-image (6), the

Numbers in parentheses refer to items included in the exhibition and illustrated in the catalog.

composite image (5), distorted perspective (49), and the animation of the inanimate (53), were developed during this period. It should, however, be pointed out that many of the fantastic works of the past, such as the engravings of Hogarth (56-60), have a rational basis, satirical or scientific, which distinguishes them from the art of the recent Dadaists and Surrealists.

The beginning of Romanticism in the mid-18th century brought with it a more serious kind of fantastic art in the terrifying prison perspectives of Piranesi (81a) and the nightmares of Füssli (112). By the year 1800, two of the greatest artists of the period, Blake (94) and Goya (124), were expressing themselves in their most significant work by means of fantastic, enigmatic images.

In the 19th century fantastic satire or humor was often used by European and American caricaturists. A purer vein of fantasy is to be found in the drawings of Gaillot (119), Victor Hugo (133), and Grandville (129-131) in France; Carroll (104) and Lear (142-144) in England; Busch (103) in Germany; Cole (105) and Beale (93) in America. By the end of the century a poetic tradition which passed in literature from Poe and Baudelaire through the French symbolists found its pictorial counterpart in certain works of Redon (163-167).

Fantastic and Anti-rational Art of the Present

It is probable that at no time in the past four hundred years has the art of the marvelous and anti-rational been more conspicuous than at the present time. The two principal movements, Surrealism and its precursor Dadaism, together with certain related artists, are discussed at length in M. Hugnet's articles in the Museum Bulletin and in the chronology of the catalog.

Dada began in New York and Zurich about 1916 and flourished after the Great War in Cologne, Berlin, Hanover and Paris. The Dadaist painters and poets were moved by indignation and despair at the spectacle of the Great War and the ensuing Peace (just as Blake and Goya had cried out against war and the hollow conventions of religion and society during the period of the Napoleonic Wars). With robust iconoclastic humor the Dadaists mocked what they considered the sorry shams of European culture. They even attacked art—especially “modern” art—but while they made fun of the pre-War Cubists, Expressionists and Futurists, they borrowed and transformed many of the principles and techniques of these earlier movements.

In so doing the Dadaists, while attempting to free themselves from conventional ideas of art, developed certain conventions of their own—for ex-

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC6

Series.Folder:

42

ample, automatism or absolute spontaneity of form (Arp, 264), extreme fantasy of subject matter (Ernst, 349; Baargeld, 292; Höch, 395), employment of accident or the laws of chance (Arp, 267; Man Ray, jacket of the catalog), fantastic use of mechanical and biological forms (Picabia, 462; Man Ray, 470; Ernst, 343, 346).

In many of their ideas the Dadaists had been anticipated by Kandinsky (226), Klee (231), Chagall (184, 185), de Chirico (193, 212), Duchamp (216, 220), Picasso (251).

Surrealism

Dada died in Paris about 1922 but from its ashes sprang Surrealism, under the leadership of the poet André Breton. The Surrealists preserved the anti-rational character of Dada but developed a far more systematic and serious experimental attitude toward the subconscious as the essential source of art. They practiced "automatic" drawing and writing, studied dreams and visions, the art of children and the insane, the theory and technique of psychoanalysis, the poetry of Lautréamont and Rimbaud.

Among the original Surrealist artists were the ex-Dadaists Ernst, Arp, and Man Ray. About 1925, Masson and Miro joined the ranks for a few years, then Tanguy, Magritte and Giacometti, and, about 1930, Dali. The Surrealists also admired and claimed independent artists such as de Chirico, Klee, Duchamp, and Picasso.

Technically, Surrealist painting falls roughly into two groups. The first group makes what can be called (to use Dali's phrase) *hand-painted dream photographs*—pictures of fantastic objects and scenes done with a technique as meticulously realistic as a Flemish primitive. Dali, Tanguy, Magritte are the chief masters of "dream photographs" but they owe a great deal to the early work of both de Chirico (190-215) and Ernst (349-353).

The subject matter, the images, of Dali and Magritte are, supposedly, of extreme uncensored spontaneity; but their precise realistic technique is the opposite of spontaneous. The second kind of Surrealist painting suggests by contrast complete spontaneity of *technique* as well as of subject matter. The free and almost casual technique of Masson (414, 416) and Miro (430, 439) belongs somewhat to the tradition of "automatic" drawing and painting previously carried on by Kandinsky (226), Klee (231, 234), and Arp (265).

Picasso (257, 260, 261) and Ernst (349, 360, 373), the most versatile of the artists associated with Surrealism, are masters of many techniques. Ernst is the foremost master of Surrealist *collage* (362) and of the semi-automatic technique of *frottage* (360; cf. list of techniques at the end of article).

The Surrealist Object

Shortly before the War the Cubists incorporated in their painting and sculpture fragments of ordinary materials such as matches, playing cards, bits of newspaper, calling cards, etc., thereby undermining the tradition that "art" must necessarily be in conventional media such as oil painting or bronze or marble.

Cubist objects appealed to a sense of design or form but Dada and Surrealist objects have primarily a psychological interest—bizarre, dreamlike, absurd, uncanny, enigmatic. They are objects of "concrete irrationality".

In 1914 Duchamp signed as a work of art an ordinary bottle drier (221), the first of a long series of "ready-mades" or ordinary manufactured objects which were to appear in Dada and Surrealist exhibitions. Some were shown unaltered, others were elaborately "assisted". The most famous Dada "ready-made assisted" is Duchamp's *Why not sneeze?* (224), a bird cage, filled with marble cubes made to look like lumps of sugar, out of which sticks a thermometer. *Why not sneeze?* is an object remarkable for the subtlety, complexity and humor of its multiple incongruities; Oppenheim's *Fur-covered cup, plate and spoon* (452) is simple by contrast but seems to exert an extraordinary and disquieting fascination: it is probably the most famous tea set in the world.

Many other kinds of objects have a Surrealist character: for instance, the *Oval wheel* (624), the *Object made from a Sears-Roebuck catalog* (626), mathematical objects (36, 37, 629-643), botanical models (644), etc.

Art of children and the insane

Why should the art of children and the insane be exhibited together with works by mature and normal artists? But, of course, nothing could be more appropriate as comparative material in an exhibition of fantastic art, for many children and psychopaths exist, at least part of the time, in a world of their own unattainable to the rest of us save in art or in dreams in which the imagination lives an unfettered life. Surrealist artists try to achieve a comparable freedom of the creative imagination, but they differ in one fundamental way from children and the insane: they are perfectly conscious of the difference between the world of fantasy and the world of reality, whereas children and the insane are often unable to make this distinction.

Conclusion

We can describe the contemporary movement toward an art of the marvelous and irrational but we are still too close to it to evaluate it. Apparently the movement is growing: under the name of Surrealism it is now active in a

DO NOT PHOTOCOPY
2nd copy available in reproductions - see card catalog

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

dozen countries of Europe, in North and South America, in Japan; it is influencing artists outside the movement as well as designers of decorative and commercial art; it is serving as a link between psychology on one hand and poetry on the other; it is frankly concerned with symbolic, "literary" or poetic subject matter and so finds itself in opposition to pure abstract art, realistic pictures of the social scene and ordinary studio painting of nudes or still life; its esthetic of the fantastic, enigmatic and anti-rational is affecting art criticism and leading to discoveries and revaluations in art history. When the movement is no longer a cause or a cockpit of controversy, it will doubtless be seen to have produced a mass of mediocre and capricious pictures and objects, a fair number of excellent and enduring works of art and even a few masterpieces. But already many things in this exhibition can be enjoyed in themselves as works of art outside and beyond their value as documents of a movement or a period.

A. H. B. JR.

List of some of the devices, techniques, and media shown in the exhibition. All items are illustrated in the catalog, *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*, unless otherwise noted.

1. **Simple composite image** (e.g.: a human figure composed of garden implements): 5, 33, 169, 172, 383, 523, 622
2. **Double image** (one of them concealed): a. monaxial (to be seen without turning picture): 44, 53 (last two illustrations); b. biaxial (to be seen by looking at picture both horizontally and vertically): 6, 320, 378
3. **Collaborative composition** (that is, made by two or more artists working in sequence): 297, 304, 305, 306, 308 (illustrated on cover of Museum Bulletin, 1936, Vol. 4, No. 2-3)
4. **Fantastic perspective** (flattened or reversed): 44, 48, 49, 59 (also 549, not illustrated)
5. **Animation of the inanimate** (e.g.: a sofa dancing with an armchair): 14, 53, 57, 60, 70, 71, 93, 103, 146, 169, 211, 214, 305, 323
6. **Metamorphoses**: 45, 53 (tree figures), 55, 90, 129, 130 (!), 131 (!), 172, 184, 217, 220, 230, 257, 262, 323, 330, 346, 349, 423, 565, 584, 609
7. **Isolation of anatomical fragments**: 27, 130, 163, 292, 410, 477
8. **Confrontation of incongruities**: 20, 56, 60, 123, 168, 180, 185, 193, 196, 215, 224, 292, 305, 306, 309, 310, 395, 444, 527, 528, 534, 574, 575, 623, 688
9. **Miracles and anomalies**: 7, 10, 25, 27, 46 (plate incorrectly numbered 45), 50, 53, 60, 76, 103, 105, 110, 119, 124, 142, 144, 163, 180, 185, 214, 244, 261, 315, 322, 323, 355, 362, 401, 409, 412, 452, 527, 578, 581, 586, 618
10. **Organic abstractions** (semi-abstract forms derived from or resembling organic forms): 55, 217, 218, 243, 257, 264, 276, 283, 288, 436, 504, 509, 654, 657, 661, 662, 663
11. **Fantastic machinery**: 76, 77, 234, 332, 346, 461, 462, 470, 476, 536, 555 (illustrated on same page as 581)
12. **Dream pictures**: 40, 94, 96, 112, 168, 374, 396 (also 145, not illustrated)
13. **Creation of evocative chaos**: 231, 326, 498, 577, 645, 670, 671 ("I have seen in the clouds and in spots on a wall what has aroused me to fine inventions . . ." —Leonardo da Vinci)
14. **Automatic and quasi-automatic drawing and painting**: 133, 226, 231, 258, 265, 297, 414, 457, 598, 609
15. **Composition by artificial accident**: 267, 287, 326, 471 (illustrated on jacket of catalog, also 223, not illustrated but important as probably the earliest)
16. **Frottage** (semi-automatic process for obtaining patterns or designs by rubbing canvas or paper which has been placed over a rough surface such as planking, embossing, a brick wall, etc.): 360 (also 356, 358, 360a, 372, not illustrated)
17. **Collage** ("the cutting up of various flat reproductions of objects or parts of objects and the pasting them together to form a picture of something new and strange" — Max Ernst): 251, 267, 289, 292, 305, 330, 341, 343, 362, 382, 383, 395, 427, 494

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: ACG	Series.Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------

18. *Combination of real and painted objects* (similar to *collage* but the objects are actual realities rather than flat reproductions): 361, 439, 541
19. *Found objects* of Surrealist character ("Ready-mades," i.e. manufactured commercial objects; mathematical and other scientific models; natural objects, etc.): 221, 623, 624, 626, 627, 629
20. *Found objects "assisted"* (i.e. altered, transformed, or combined by the artist): 224, 309, 324, 369, 401, 444, 476, 572, 608
21. *Dada and Surrealist objects* (objects made by artists as distinguished from objects "found" or merely "assisted"): 287, 377, 435, 452, 455, 478, 510, 512

Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism, published by the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, contains a chronology of the Dada and Surrealist movements, 217 illustrations and a complete catalog of the exhibition.

Dada and Surrealism, two explanatory essays by Georges Hugnet, are published in the Museum of Modern Art Bulletin, Vol. 4, no. 2-3.

The illustration on the first page is from an original *collage* by Max Ernst, no. 340 in the exhibition; "Above the clouds the midnight passes. Above the midnight hovers the invisible bird of the day. A little higher than the bird the ether expands and the walls and the roofs float."



The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE. SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1936

Rare Surrealist Data a Gift to Museum Here

Walter P. Chrysler Jr. Presents 2 Literary Collections to Modern Gallery

By Philip Boyer Jr.

The Museum of Modern Art announced yesterday the acquisition of the rarest and most complete existing collection of literature pertaining to the Surrealist movement, the gift of Walter P. Chrysler Jr., chairman of the Institution's Library Committee.

The collection, a part of which will be catalogued and shown at the exhibition of fantastic art, Dada and Surrealism, which opens at the museum on December 9, undoubtedly will be the source to which all students of the movement will come for information. The 700 items, including books, pamphlets, broadsides and other memorabilia, were assembled from the collections of Paul Eluard and Dr. Camille Gause, both of which were bought last summer by Mr. Chrysler after they had been on the market for about two years.

"The Approaching Revolution"

Not only does the collection contain numerous volumes and pamphlets which are virtually irreplaceable, but there also are many autographs and notations in the handwriting of the founders of the Surrealist revival. In one of the books is a manuscript authorizing the publication, "Le Surrealisme au Service de la Revolution," the organ of the group from 1930 to 1933. It is signed, among others, by René Crevel, Salvador Dalí, Eluard, Max Ernst, Peret and Yves Tanguy. The purpose of the magazine, set forth in the manuscript, is: "Not only to permit them (the leaders of Surrealism) to answer in a definitive fashion to the mob (canaille) which believes in thinking, but also to prepare the turning of the living intellectual forces of today to the advantage of the approaching revolution."

The pamphlets, broadsides, advertisements of exhibitions and similar material present an accurate historical picture of the Surrealist revival from 1924, when Breton published the first "Manifesto of Surrealism: Soluble Fish," until the present day. The movement was an outgrowth of Dada, which flourished from 1916 to 1922, when it died a natural death. Dada was named and organized as a movement designed to break down all established concepts of art, literature and philosophy.

Definition of Surrealism

Breton defined Surrealism in 1924, soon after the publication of the first manifesto, a copy of which is contained in the Chrysler library. Writing ten years later, Breton said the definition applied as well in 1934 as it did when it first was formulated. It follows:

"Surrealism: Pure psychic automatism by which it is intended to express verbally, in writing or by other means, the real process of thought. It is thought's dictation, in the absence of all control exercised by the reason, and outside all esthetic or moral pre-occupations."

At the same time Breton defined the philosophical concept of the movement:

"Surrealism rests in the belief in the superior reality of certain forms

of association neglected heretofore; in the omnipotence of the dream and in the disinterested play of thought. It tends definitely to do away with all psychic mechanism, and to substitute itself for them in the solution of the principal problems of life."

Another of Breton's concepts of Surrealism is "madness, dream, the absurd, the incoherent, the hyperbolic and everything that is opposed to the summary appearance of the real." Writing in 1932 he said that probably the best example of the Surrealist principle of associating two mutually distant realities (often animate and inanimate) on a plane unrelated to either of them was de Lautreamont's:

"The chance meeting, on a dissecting table, of a sewing machine and an umbrella."

The Eluard portion of the collection includes 129 volumes, most of which are autographed and inscribed to him. Eluard is one of the foremost contemporary French poets, who has been one of the most ardent proponents of Surrealism since its inception. Many of the volumes contain illustrations by Surrealist artists, who also have autographed them.

"Mr. Knife Miss Fork"

Among the Eluard books are "Mr. Knife Miss Fork" by René Crevel, translated by Kay Boyle and illustrated, on almost every other page, by Max Ernst. The book contains the impressions of a child concerning her father and his mistress. Also "Sleep, Sleep Among the Stones," by Benjamin Peret, illustrated by Yves Tanguy; "The Night of Loveless Nights," by Robert Desnos, illustrated by Yves Tanguy; and essay by René Crevel on anti-obscureism, illustrated by reproductions of Dalí paintings; and several drawings in ink by John Miro

accompanied by poems by Lise Hirtz. One of these, entitled "There was a little Magpie," follows:

"There was a little magpie
Always in despair
And always in her bed
She was colored black all over
But very pretty in spite of this
One day she left on horseback
On horseback riding a mouse
And came back in very bad shape
And died in her bed."

Also in the Eluard collection are a number of picture books by Max Ernst, who with Bargeid and Hans Arp became a leader of the Cologne Dadaists in 1918. He went to Paris when the movement collapsed, and since 1924 has been one of the most important Surrealist painters. He was the inventor of a technique known as "collage," or paper-pasting. A number of reproductions of his achievements in this direction are in the collection. Ernst took wood engravings from Victorian magazines and affixed mon-

strous reptilian and animal parts to the principals in the drawings.

At first sight the pictures seem homogeneous—so cleverly has the pasting been done, and it is not until after a closer inspection that one realizes Ernst has superimposed the fantastic creatures. There are five of these "collage" novels in the collection entitled "Kindness Week, or the Seven Capital Elements." Each of the first four books represents a day: Sunday, Monday Tuesday and Wednesday; the fifth book embraces Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Each day has its element—mud, water, fire, blood, darkness, vision and the unknown. In several cases the day is represented by an animal, part human and part beast.

"Natural History," another example of Ernst's works in the collection, contains numerous fantastic un-

earthly creatures produced by "frottage," or rubbing a soft pencil or brush over a sheet of paper laid on the rough surfaces of planks, brick walls, stones, etc. The grain of the objects is transferred to the paper in the same way that the markings of a coin are reproduced on paper laid over the coin and rubbed with a pencil.

Sandwiched among the announcements of exhibitions, political attacks, and statements of the Surrealists are several accounts of their activities as chronicled by the French press. There is the story of a showing of the Surrealist film, "L'Age d'Or," on December 9, 1930, when demonstrators unfriendly to the movement threw stench bombs and lit smoke bombs in the theater where the picture was being shown; blackjacked the audience, smashed 80,000 francs worth of furniture and destroyed an exhibition of paintings by Dalí, Ernst, Man Ray, Miro and Tanguy.

Antecedents of Surrealism

In a volume called "This Quarter," published in 1932, Breton reviews the antecedents of Surrealism, saying the Gothic novel and the writings of Horace Walpole, Mrs. Radcliffe and Monk Lewis were forerunners of the movement.

In both collections are examples of Surrealist works done in countries other than France, the well spring of the revival. Although the content of the books, manuscripts and pamphlets may seem slightly startling to the novice in Surrealism, the typography is universally excellent. Some of the broadsides are startling. When the Surrealists set out to attack something (as they did the Colonial Exhibition of 1931 in Paris) they do not mince words, and their prose is completely intelligible to the layman. Examples of these political attacks are frequent in the Eluard collection.

Cannot Be Duplicated

In giving the collections, Mr. Chrysler said he had no intention of identifying himself with the Surrealist movement. He added, however, that the two collections would fill a gap in the museum's library of modern art, and that they could not be duplicated.

Mr. Chrysler's opinion was that the movement had afforded an opportunity to too many mediocre and poor artists to "hitch their wagon" to what originally was a sound conception.

"When the collections came on the market two years ago," he said, "each one was fine, but neither was complete. Miraculously they did not overlap, and as chairman of the museum's library committee I felt that we should take advantage of this great opportunity to acquire the finest collection of Surrealist literature in all the world."

"The Surrealist collection contains much original material which it is impossible to duplicate, and will be the most important single source of information on the subject for scholars in the world."

Although he personally has no interest in Surrealism, Mr. Chrysler felt that the movement occupied a definite place in the history of the world's art, and as such the museum should own the collection.

Mr. Chrysler, whose collection of modern art comprises 500 paintings, including twenty-seven Picassos, the largest number of this artist's works owned by any private collector in the United States, said his interest in art dated from the time he was a fifteen-year-old student in Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Conn.

Started With a Renoir

"During one of my vacations," he said, "I saw a Renoir painting in New York which I set my heart upon. I saved my allowance for six months and finally had enough money to buy it. I took it back to school with me and hung it on the wall in my bedroom."

The same day, Mr. Chrysler said, he was told that the corridor master had gone into his room, seen the painting, torn it down and broken it into a thousand pieces. He complained to the head of the school, who summoned the corridor master. The latter said he believed that nudes should have no place in the bedroom of adolescent boys. The head demanded that the master apologize to Mr. Chrysler on behalf of the school, as he himself had done. He did. Mr. Chrysler now numbers in his collection much finer than the one which was destroyed.



Max Ernst's illustration for the poem "Invention" in Paul Eluard's volume entitled "Repetitions"

Herald Tribune photo—Aime

Above: Two pictures from Max Ernst's series of books entitled "Kindness Week or the Seven Capital Elements." The artist composed these pictures by cutting up and pasting together wood engravings of fifty years ago. The process is known as "collage"

He said that Surrealism, which developed in Paris about 1924, was the direct descendant of the Dadaistic interest in bizarre and anti-rational conceptions. The movement, he said, was more than a mere artistic trend. It is a philosophy and way of life "which has involved some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age."

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

DADA AND DISNEY TO BE IN ART SHOW

Modern Museum Plans to Open
Wednesday an Exhibition
of Fantastic Creations.

WILL CONTINUE TO JAN. 27

Di Paolo, da Vinci, Thurber and
Rube Goldberg Included in
Historical Survey.

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West Fifty-third Street, will open to the public on Wednesday morning an "Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism." The show is to remain on view through Jan. 27, except on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, when the museum will be closed.

The four floors of the museum will be devoted to the exhibition, which will include more than 700 objects. The earliest date of any object shown will be about 1450, the latest 1936. More than 157 American and European artists will be represented, ranging from such extremes as Giovanni di Paolo and Leonardo da Vinci of the fifteenth century to Walt Disney, Rube Goldberg and Thurber of the twentieth century.

This is the second of a series of exhibitions planned to present in an objective and historical manner the principal movements of modern art. The first of these, "Cubism and Abstract Art," was held at the museum last Spring. The main body of the exhibition is devoted to the Dada and Surrealist movements of the last twenty years together with certain pioneers. A number of artists, both American and European, who have worked along related but independent lines are brought together in a separate division. There are also special sections on fantastic architecture and on comparative material, including the art of children and the insane.

In giving a brief outline of Dada and Surrealism, in his preface to the catalogue of the show, Alfred H. Barr Jr., director of the museum, tells of the origin of Dada:

"In Zurich in 1916, well before the end of the war, Dada was born, the child of disillusion and spiritual exhaustion. The Dadaists scoffed at all conventional values and all pretensions. They rejected everything (including modern art) and accepted anything. They made pictures of floozies, odds and ends, paper, string, snapshots, clockworks, popular illustrations, lace and bus tickets. They made pictures with their eyes shut or with their back turned. After the armistice dadaism grew in Paris and Germany. Dada was a bitter gesture made by artists for whom the war, Versailles and inflation had made civilization and art, temporarily at least, a bad joke.

"Surrealism, which developed in Paris around 1924, was the direct descendant of the Dadaist interest in the bizarre, the spontaneous and the anti-rational. But while the Surrealist program carried on the iconoclasm of Dada, it added serious researches into subconscious images, dreams, visions, automatic and psychoanalytic drawings. Surrealism, so far as its serious adherents are concerned, is more than a literary or an art movement; it is a philosophy, a way of life, a cause which has involved some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age."

Fur-Lined-Cup School of Art Gets Spotlight

Modern Museum Showing
Dada, Surrealism and
Frankly Insane Works

Any Material Admitted

Display Has Peanut Appeal,
Visitor Goes On and On

A fur-lined saucer and tea cup, a conglomeration of small objects collected by a psychopath, and a number of superb oil paintings by Pablo Picasso are among the 694 items in the exhibition of fantastic art, dada and surrealism which opens today at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West Fifty-third Street, and continues through January 17.

The show is concerned with phantasmagorical and irrational artistic manifestations from the fifteenth century to the present. The collection, which occupies the four lower floors of the museum, is a sequel to the institution's exhibition of cubism and abstract art last year.

The museum considers that the exhibition offers material for the study of one of the important and conspicuous movements of modern art. In discussing the show, Alfred H. Barr Jr., director of the museum, said that Surrealism and its predecessors, Dada, that might seem outrageous and iconoclastic, and that these movements, in advocating anti-rational values, almost seem to have declared war on the standards of established society.

Presents an Apology
"But may it be remembered," continued Mr. Barr, "that the Dadaists and Surrealists held society responsible for the World War, the Treaty of Versailles, post-war inflation, rearmament and a variety of social, political and economic follies which have made the realities of Christendom in their eyes a spectacle of madness just as shocking as their most outrageous superrealities may be to the outside world."

Facing the visitor as he enters the lobby of the museum is a piece of whirling apparatus, made of steel and glass, whose concentric rings are designed to have a semi-hypnotic influence. The machine, which was built by Marcel Duchamp, French artist and "anti-artist," is operated by an electric motor which the spectator can regulate to suit his taste.

At the right of the entrance is an object more than six feet high and made in the likeness of a peculiar human creature, constructed by Wallace Putnam, New York artist. Among its components are a rolling-pin capped by a green glass insulator, two umbrella handles, a tin strainer, a rubber, a large picture frame, a barrel hoop, an automobile reflector, a piece of rubber hose and the top of a refuse barrel. The whole is surmounted by a pair of ostrich plumes and a horse-whip. The composition is entitled "Agog."

"Why Not Sneeze?"

On the same floor is a small cage containing many lumps of sugar, some parrot food, an inverted postage stamp and a thermometer called "Why Not Sneeze?" also by Duchamp. "Why Not Sneeze?" is a "ready-made," cage. This artist invented an "infallible" system to beat roulette, and one of the shares he issued to his friends to finance an expedition to Monte Carlo is included in the exhibition.

Max Ernst, the Surrealist who invented the process of "collage" and "frottage," is represented by forty-nine works, including "The Elephant Celebes" and "The Gramineous bicycle" furnished with bells the pliffered graybeards and the echinoderms bending the spine to look for carcasses."

Among earlier artists whose allegorical and fantastic compositions are shown are Peter Brueghel the elder, Albrecht Durer, Hans Holbein the younger, Leonardo da Vinci, Martin Schongauer, William Hogarth, Lewis Carroll, George Cruikshank, Daumier and Goya. There are more than 130 artists represented.

Like Eating Peanuts

Many persons attending the preview found some of the conceptions, particularly those of the later Surrealists a little hard to follow. Nevertheless, as one of the visitors expressed it, "this show's like eating peanuts, you just keep on and on." Another, after going through the exhibition and stopping at every object there said:

"If you threw a brick up in the air in here, there's a good chance it wouldn't come down."

Among those at the exhibition were Conger Goodyear, president of the Coney Museum, Mrs. C. M. Ellis, George Howe, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas I. Laughlin, Dali, and Man Ray.

Experts on modern art who were among the most important ever held in the history of the United States. Never before has there been assembled such a representative collection of this branch of art. The works of Picasso, Picaso and Miro seemed to be among the most popular. The "Personage Throwing a Stone at a Bird" by Miro was unusually well received.

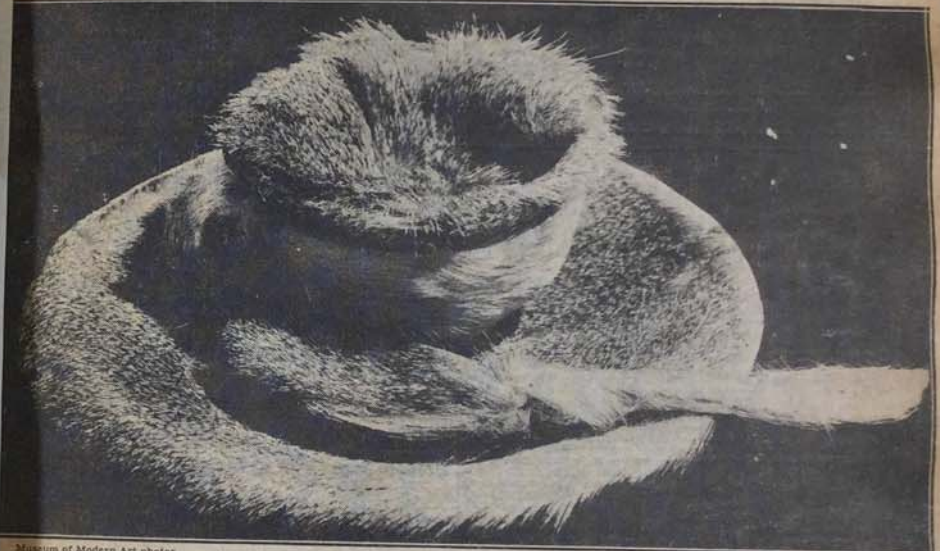
There were a considerable number of sculptures, one of them "Lunar Asparagus," which stood about five feet high, being among the most peculiar. Hans Arp was represented by forty-four works, including four called "collage with squares arranged according to the laws of chance."

There also were twenty-three paintings and other works by Dali, the latest drawn this year. Frederico Castellon, whose art resembles that of Dali, was represented by five paintings and drawings.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1936.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1936.

Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism, a New Show at Museum of Modern Art



Museum of Modern Art photos
Object 1936, Far-Covered Cup,
by Meret Oppenheim, one of 694 items



"Look Out, Here They Come Again!" a Thurber drawing, another Museum of Modern Art exhibit

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1936.

EXHIBITION OPENS
OF 'FANTASTIC ART'700 Objects by European and
American Artists Shown at
Modern Museum.

DADAISM CULT PREVAILS

Exponent Declares Movement
Was Born in Night Club—
Public Gets View Today.

By EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL
The exhibition called "Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism" opened last night at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West Fifty-third Street. There was a preview reception at 10 o'clock held by the trustees for members of the museum and their friends. But the real test will come today, when the doors are opened to the public. It may prove a test of endurance on both sides. Whether the Van Gogh record is to be challenged and broken, time must tell. As the public little by little gets wind of what is in store for it there, the doors will probably have to be closed at frequent intervals to prevent trampling. The show is that "marvelous."

Europe, it becomes at once manifest, has been ransacked. Alfred Barr was abroad all last Summer, and most of the show has already been seen by our customs officials. What they made of it is not known. But they let it through. As for the American quota, that must have been much less difficult to manage—just a matter of calling up Mr. Budworth and asking him to stop at studios with his truck. But it remained for the museum staff to assemble these 700 and more objects by more than 157 European and American artists. And any one who has assembled a dada and surrealist show can tell you that it isn't as easy as building a Coney Island.

To avoid possible misapprehension, the public would do well to read this paragraph in Mr. Barr's catalogue preface before looking at anything in the museum:

"It should, however, be stated that surrealism as an art movement is a serious affair and that for many it is more than an art movement: it is a philosophy, a way of life, a cause to which some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age are giving themselves with consuming devotion."

After that the visitor is better prepared to appreciate the life-sized object called "Agon," created in 1935 by Wallace Putnam, which stands just to the right of the entrance, an object seriously compounded of umbrella vertebra, a piece of hose, a rolling pin, a colander, a funnel, a feather plume and, indeed, more plastic ingredients than can be recalled in an impromptu way.

Not all of the objects in this lavish show, of course, are as complicated as that. There are, for instance, the simple cup, plate and spoon by Meret Oppenheim, made of fur. And still in the realm of sculpture—there is Miro's object, No. 444, which rises out of a damaged derby, incorporates the model of a woman's leg, a pink toy goldfish, a ball suspended at the end of a bit of string, the whole miraculous device surmounted by a stuffed parrot in quite good condition.

The paintings are often just paintings, although pretty frequently, too—as in the shingle-and-yardstick portrait of Ralph Dusenberry by Arthur Dove, or the "Peregrinations of Georges Hugnet," by Oscar Dominguez, which shows a toy horse trotting through a toy bicycle, or Max Ernst's "Two Children Menaced by a Nightingale," in which the gate swings outward—the paintings do not remain in two dimensions.

Both dadaism and surrealism belong to a charming interlude of irrationality before our world went altogether mad. Dada, as Georges Hugnet explains in his essay in the museum bulletin, was born in a Zurich night club in 1916. But beyond that it is "ageless," has no parents, stands alone, makes "no distinction between what is and what is not."

And what is the precise difference between dadaism (ironically and optimistically and idealistically started as an "ism" to end all "isms") and surrealism which reaches out to mesmerize the Sublime? Well, even Mr. Hugnet leaves that question a trifle vague when he says that surrealism "springs from the marvelous and has always existed." Those who insist upon dates may find comfort in the fact that "the first theoretical foundations were laid in 1924."

The show at the museum, however, delves much further into the past, by way of demonstrating that elements of the "fantastic" in art existed hundreds of years before there was any nightclub in Zurich and before dada began to "make a clean sweep of everything."

So we find certain hallucinations and paradoxical broodings by artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, among them Hans Baldung, with his "Bewitched Groom," Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Durer, Hans Holbein the Younger, Schongauer, Leonardo da Vinci and Hieronymus Bosch—his study for a "Temptation of St. Anthony" is lent by the Louvre, and from our own Metropolitan comes the wonderful "Descent into Hell," attributed to the "school of" rather than to Bosch himself, though it is quite worthy of him.

The roster of "moderns"—even if held to the twentieth century and made to omit such artists as Hogarth, Blake, Daumier, Meryon, Victor Hugo (a "Satanic Head" in wash), Edward Lear and Odilon Redon—would be far too vast to permit of full enumeration here. Among the outstanding men of our epoch represented are Chagall, Chirico, Marcel Duchamp (his "King and Queen Traversed by Swift Nudes" hangs near the famous "Coffee Mill" of 1911), Kandinsky, Klee, Picasso, Man Ray, Miro and Salvador Dali.

Miro, by the way, is now having a one-man show at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, and Dali, just arrived in America, will show some of his new pictures at the Julien Levy beginning tomorrow.

Dada rides in the saddle, messieurs, mesdames. The bars are down and the season of exquisite mal-de-lune has blossomed in all its splendor of hokusopochondria.

NEW YORK EVENING JOURNAL

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1936

NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1936.

Surrealistes' Weird Art
Viewed by Smart SetJulien Levys
Give Large
Reception

LAST NIGHT ALL Gotham's swellest artistic and intellectual gentry were on their toes. The Museum of Modern Art gave its first private showing of the Winter season...a highly spectacular exhibition of surrealist painters. The list of painters included the much publicized Salvador Dali...and all the other boys whose weird brain waves, transformed into canvas, give an average person the creeps.

The Museum of Modern Art has not only been tremendously successful in arranging unusually interesting exhibitions...but its private first night "vernissages" have become very fashionable and there is a great scramble for tickets.

After the exhibition the Julian Levys gave a large reception at their residence...which was most appropriate, for Julian Levy has been one of the important figures in familiarizing surrealism in this country...and most of the truly extraordinary surrealist painters have exhibited first in America at the Levy Galleries.

"One can't help but wonder what the very serious and somewhat austere board of directors of the Museum of Modern Art must think of their newest exhibitions."

The Museum first came into being through the encouragement of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Mrs. Rockefeller is immensely interested in modern art and has her own private collection hung in a special gallery on the top story of her house.

Real Value of Dada and
Surrealist Show Rests on
Few Good Pictures
Drawings by Lunatic Asylum Inmates
as Good as Most of the 700 Items
in Museum's Fantastic Exhibit

By EMILY GENAUER.

It was comforting to recall as we staggered out of the Museum of Modern Art's newly opened "Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism" into the comparatively fresh, sweet, gasoline-ridden air of W. 53rd St. that if the madness of the surrealists had jumbled up our insides they had themselves been driven by it to considering "Is Suicide a Solution?" They posed the question across the cover of an early issue of their magazine, "La Revolution Surrealiste" (1924). Quickly they dismissed the suggestion, however, because it was logical. And logic to a surrealist is tantamount to dishonor, and therefore worse than death.

For us the solution was much simpler. A stiff drink—and quickly dissipated were our own nausea,



Emily Genauer.

our distressing doubts, all our concern that such horseplay as this exhibition would throw for an irretrievable loss that public understanding and appreciation of modern art which has been steadily increasing (and to a great extent through the efforts of the Museum of Modern Art). For, of course, the only way to regard an exhibition like this is, to paraphrase John Milton, as

"Sport that wrinkled care derides, And laughter holding both his sides. Come and trip it as ye go

Through the light, fantastic show." The Museum itself considers the exhibition as "offering material for the study of one of the important and conspicuous movements of modern art." In so doing, however, it "does not intend to set its stamp of approval upon a particular aspect of modern art any more than it did when it presented last year its retrospective exhibition of cubism and abstract art."

Apologizes for Show.

It even goes so far as to apologize for the show, in a manner of speaking. Alfred Barr, director, says in the catalog, "There is much about surrealism and its predecessor, Dada, that may seem wantonly outrageous and inconceivable—in fact, these

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series/Folder:

42

movements in advocating anti-rational values seem almost to have declared war on the conventions and standards of established society. But it may be remembered that the Dadaists and surrealists hold society responsible for the great war, the Treaty of Versailles, post-war inflation, rearrangement, and a variety of social, political and economic follies which have made the realities of Christendom in their eyes a spectacle of madness just as shocking as their most outrageous super-realities may be to the outside world.

And so the surrealists, in their hollow skepticism, instead of attempting constructively to pave the way for a new society, have built up an ideology of nihilism and frustration. In some strange way they figure that such things as Wallace Putnam's "Ago," consisting of a rolling pin, tin colander, barrel hoop, rubber hose, feather plume and horseshoe; Marcel Duchamp's "Why Not Sneeze," which is nothing more than a small wooden bird cage filled with lumps of sugar and a thermometer, and Giacometti's "Disagreeable Object," which is exactly that, will point the way to a newer, richer life.

To fortify themselves against that public disregard which would cramp their style and so cut off the notoriety which is their lifeblood, leading eventually to their extermination, they have dug up for themselves an illustrious genealogy, a family tree that includes Leonardo Da Vinci, Albrecht Durer, Hans Baldung, Hieronymus Bosch, Giovanni de Paolo, Hogarth, William Blake, Dea-croix, Goya, and Meryon, to mention only a few.

All of them, they claim, were into the fabric of their art threads of dreams and fantasy—and ipso facto became surrealists, a surrealist being, if definition is possible, an artist who believes that the submerged mind is capable of more interesting, articulate and "marvelous" (his word is their hall-mark) creative thought than the waking mind, and so confines himself to painting dreams.

Comparison with Da Vinci.

Now you can't poem-pooh Da Vinci wherever you find him. You can, however, and with complete justification, look upon the little woodcut made from one of his designs and taken from Pacioli's "Divina Proportione," published in Venice in 1509, and wonder what this has to

do with either surrealism or the real art of Da Vinci. For the famed Italian was also a mathematician and scientist, and it was entirely plausible that he should draw a small faceted, geometrical shape to illustrate what was apparently a scientific work of the period. That combination of triangles, however, is no more authentic as an example of da Vinci's art, than would, for instance, one of the complicated graphs used by S. F. B. Morse, inventor, in perfecting his telegraph, be as a specimen of Morse's art, though comparison between the artistic talents of Da Vinci and Morse is farfetched to be sure.

Bosch—or his school—on the other hand, is represented in the show by a real picture, "The Temptation of St. Anthony" loaned by the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City. No excuse is needed for this superb picture, but explanation of the fact that its subject, being traditionally fantastic, needed fantastic portrayal, may be in place.

As a matter of fact, fantasy, regardless of the demands of subject, has always been an important element in creative talent. Hardly a poet or painter or composer has lived who has not delved deep into the recesses of his imagination, to tap his inventive resources, to uncover more fantastic and beautiful visions of places and things than are dreamed of in the average man's philosophy.

To label such painters surrealists, however, is absurd. For surrealists live for their philosophy, and their pictures and sculptures and writings are only instruments whereby their ideas may be expressed. To the great painters they have magnanimously taken into their fold, however, fantasy was only grist for the mill of their art. The only important thing was to paint fine pictures. We have already taken to task the surrealists for advocating nihilism rather than reconstruction. We suggested this merely as the only logical and constructive ideology to rise from the skepticism engendered in them by the present state of society. Whatever side they took would have no bearing on their artistic stature. For in either case it would be the domination of an idea, of pictorial over plastic content.

Real Value of the Show.

So the real value of this show, as it does in most others, rests on the good pictures in it. And there are probably only a few dozen such out of the seven hundred items in the whole exhibition. There are the

superb early things; Durer's masterly and powerful "Man in Despair"; the Bosch drawings and paintings; Paolo's "Shipwreck"; an extraordinary portrait of Charles V, executed by an unknown German of the sixteenth century; sketches from Goya's "Los Caprichos"; the large Rousseau "Le Reve"; two canvases by Marc Chagall; the whole section of mysterious, silent, melancholy early Chirico's; Picasso's "Seated Woman"; Dali's "Persistence of Memory" and "City of Drawers"; a few of Max Ernst's more lyric attempts; Magritte's "Mental Calculus"; Miro's "Personage throwing a stone at a bird"; Blume's "Parade"; Georgia O'Keeffe's "Cow's Skull," and Kopman's "The Jungle."

There were many others that were merely clever or intriguing. The cartoons of Rube Goldberg, for example, especially the one of a machine for keeping a buttonhole flower fresh; the drawings made by inmates of lunatic asylums (as good as most of the rest of the stuff in the show); the mad drawings by Thuermer; the photo-montage based on the celebrated Peaches Browning case and used in the defunct Evening Graphic in 1927; the sculptured head covered with black felt and given zippers for eyes, are some of them.

One of Choicest Items.

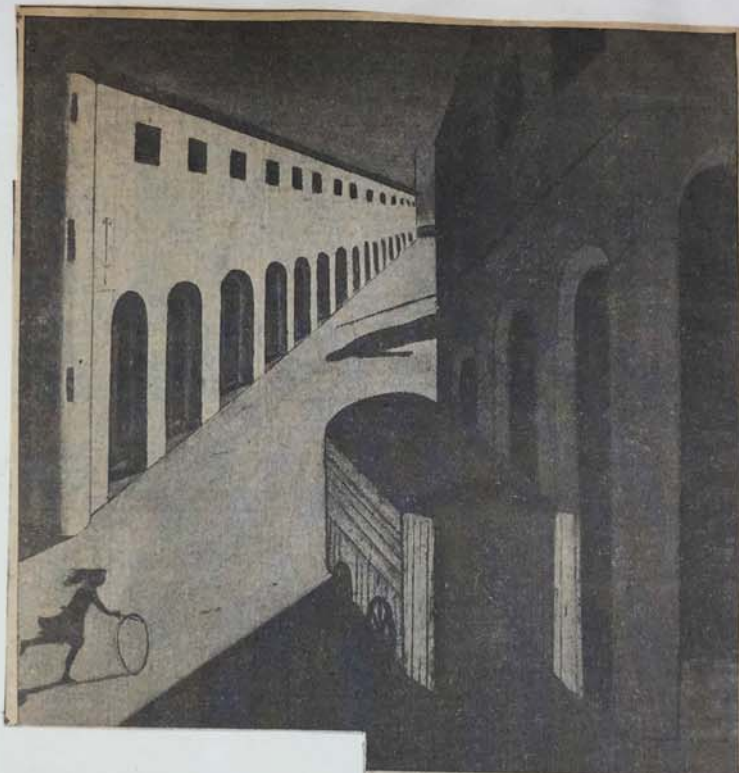
One of the choicest items in the whole exhibit, however, was the ceramic by Russell Altkin, entitled the "Futility of a Well-Ordered Life," and showing a young girl with lamb chops on her shoulders and a fried egg in her hand, a giraffe of scampering white mice, a hole cut out of her middle and the cut-out arranged alongside—a parody, in fact, of all of surrealism's clichés, but especially of Dali. Altkin, apparently feels as we do about the majority of the surrealists. They're like Father William in the poem in "Alice in Wonderland":—

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white."

And yet you incessantly stand on your head.
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain."

But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
"Why, I do it again and again."



De Chirico's "Melancholy and Mystery of a Street," painted in 1914, and the portrait of Charles V (shown left), painted in Germany in the sixteenth century, are somewhat similar in their composition, both works being dominated by diagonal lines and sharp contrasts. De Chirico did his picture ten years before the surrealists started their monkey-shines, and the unknown painter of Charles V almost 400 years earlier. Both are claimed by the surrealists and included in the Museum of Modern Art's large exhibition of "Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism."



The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

Farewell to Art's Greatness

Modern Museum's Surrealism Says Good-by to All That—A Sensational Show.

By HENRY McBRIDE.

Those surrealists are out to capture New York; and if you do not watch out, if you do not quickly arrange some system of defense, they will do so. The shattering bombardments now emanating from the Museum of Modern Art are not the first attack upon this fair city. On the contrary, there have been so many and apparently harmless onsets in the recent years that the guileless citizens got used to them, and last Tuesday evening, when the opening explosions of the private view occurred, the fashionable multitude allowed them to detonate unconcernedly, just as though nothing were happening.

In reality the ground had been shot from under their feet. The poor things had no longer any place to stand. They had nothing left, no clothes, no house, nothing to eat, and certainly nothing in the way of a fashion. All they had was a dream and it was a bad dream at that.

And they do not even have an art show. What they are pelted with are political arguments.

At the same time, the event is interesting. Oh, it is very interesting! The destruction of a world is always an interesting spectacle; much more fun, if you must know the truth, than the slow, laborious construction of a new one.

For these artists are not holding the mirror up to nature, like John Gielgud in Hamlet, but they are showing you what they wish nature to be. Salvador Dali, the arch-conspirator of the movement, among the painters, said on arriving in America the other day especially to foment opinion along surrealist lines: "Our work now is to make the world of the fantastic pass into the world of the real," and Andre Breton, the writer, and the Stalin of this political party, says practically the same thing: "I believe in the future resolution of two states (in appearance so contradictory), dream and reality, into a sort of absolute reality: surreality."

By Way of Definition.

Andre Breton preaches all this on behalf of what he calls "liberty" but what he really means by that word is "lawless license." Mr. Breton is too inexperienced with the world and especially too inexperienced with philosophy to understand that the word "liberty" is a tentative word suggesting a line of conduct toward others rather than a wholesale indulgence of one's own personal desires, and if it has been and always will be hedged in with a long list of Moais "thou shalt nots" and by Epictetan renunciations of the flesh.

Mr. Breton, Mr. Dali, and thousands of other young men in Europe are still puzzled and dazed by the episode of the great war. Having had manifestly robust educations (young people all over the world at the present day are too

declared war on the conventions and standards of established society. But it may be remembered that the Dadaists and Surrealists hold society responsible for the great war, the Treaty of Versailles, post-war inflation, rearmament and a variety of social, political and economic follies which have made the realities of Christendom in their eyes a spectacle of madness just as shocking as their most outrageous super-realities may be to the outside world."

From Mr. Hugnet's essay here are a few phrases, culled at random, much in the way the Dadaists recommend: "In Berlin as elsewhere we notice the persistent desire to destroy art, the deliberate intent to wipe out existing notions of beauty, the insistence upon the greatest possible obliteration of individuality." . . . "Marcel Duchamp, a painter first influenced by Cezanne then by Cubism, began as early as 1913 to feel bored with the new aestheticism." . . . "Picabia sublimates the machine-made object and recreates it outside its original purpose according to the laws of chance very much as had Duchamp, who constantly insisted upon not creating works of art." . . . "Baargeld soon found himself heading both the Communist party in the Rhineland and allied with the German Communist party. Nevertheless, together with Max Ernst, he energetically opposed the Berlin Dada movement because he disapproved of its exclusively propaganda spirit." . . . "A protest for obscenity was lodged with the police. The police came and had to admit that what had excited most indignation was an etching by Durer. The exhibition was reopened. Here again Dada's action was both demoralizing and destructive, revolutionary and anti-religious." . . . Andre Breton, after the leveling action of anarchical Dada, proposes to declare allegiance to folly, to dreams, to the absurd, to the incoherent, to the hyperbolic—in a word, to all that is contrary to the general appearance of reality." &c. &c.

much petted) they were unable to see anything of nature in that affair and, in their bewilderment, they consulted all the astrologists and Dr. Freud of Vienna. Unaware that Dr. Freud was a specialist in a strictly limited field they mistook him for the doctor of the universe and proceeded to follow out all his instructions literally—and with disastrous results to themselves, as artists.

In fact, one of the first things they resolved upon was not to be artists at all. The truly significant surrealists in the Modern Museum's new show deliberately shun the art of painting and replace it with literature. If Mr. Dali were to drop psychiatry for a moment his career would end instantly for he is no more of a painter than the old ladies who copy pictures in the Louvre. The painters who edge slightly on the movement, such as Picasso with his superb "Seated Woman" and Joan Miro with his charming gift for improvisation, are themselves considered "suspect" by the dictators of surrealism.

Let us think I am distorting the intentions of these innovators, it is time I should quote you from the Museum's Bulletin, which contains helpful essays on the subject by Georges Hugnet and an introduction by Alfred H. Barr. Bless you, I am not at all prejudiced against these young people nor against their revolutionary ideas. Being entirely on the side lines and never much of a participant in political struggles, I can regard it with the proper detachment of a scientist. As for doctoring this "behaviorism"—not at all. I am not a medico, any more than I am a preacher. But if you, dear reader, are already frightened at the prospect of this open war against all that you have hitherto held sacred, I promise, before I quit, to suggest a subtle and Machiavellian defense for you to adopt.

But the quotations. Mr. Barr says: "There is much about surrealism and its predecessor, Dada, that may seem wantonly outrageous and iconoclastic; in fact, these movements in advocating anti-rational values seem almost to have

Ordinarily, the Man Ray drawings in the Valentine Gallery would upset the town, but when the town's already upset, you can't re-upset it—if you get what I mean—and the town is definitely upset by the surrealist exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art, an exhibition in which Man Ray plays a leading part, he being one of the original Dadaists, and the only one of eminence that America has produced. America produced Man Ray, yet it is scarcely fair to call him an American, since he was so firmly adopted by France when he went to that country sixteen years ago, that to all intents and purposes he is French. Like Josephine Baker, he had an instant success in Paris. I shall never forget my surprise when calling upon Erik Satie, the musician, at a time when Man Ray had only lived a couple of years in

Paris, to have the composer say that a certain thing he was describing had "a Man Ray effect"—thus proving that the name "Man Ray" had become an understood symbol in every day French conversations. It is far from being that here, but that is the price expatriates have to pay when they deliberately separate themselves from our lovely system of making publicity.

For the purposes of a return into America and to recall himself to old friends Man Ray has put a slight curb upon himself and does not venture as far into the realms of pure folly, as Andre Breton recommends, but Andre Breton is still in Paris and may never hear how Man Ray stooped to conquer in New York. Man Ray shows line drawings, very sensitive and at times almost normal. They prove that Man Ray could draw in the old-fashioned way if he chose, and the ability to draw in the old-fashioned way is a thing that all those who can do it like to prove, from Matisse on down the line.

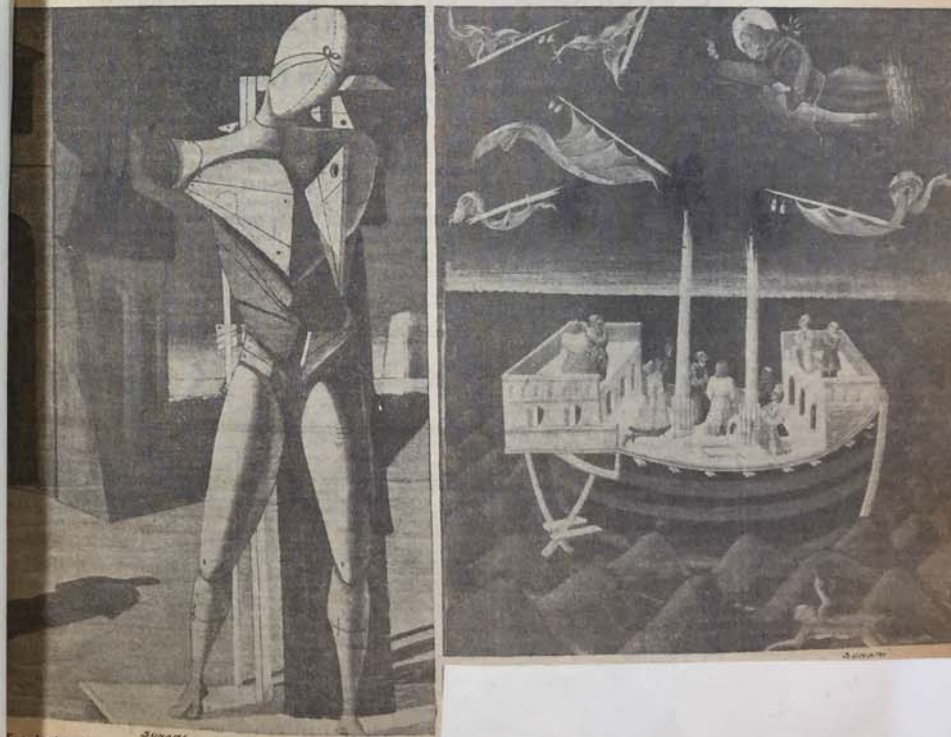
Man Ray's lines are somewhat wiry, somewhat uplactic, and wholly intellectual. He'll say they are that way on purpose, no doubt, since it is now such bad form in Paris to be artistic. However, there's a tinge of aristocracy here and there that got in when Man Ray wasn't watching, no doubt.

Man Ray can rest assured it's O.K. with us. We'll never tell Andre Breton.

The show has the advantage of a rather swell introduction by the French poet, Paul Eluard. M. Eluard, who, the French say, is Gertrude Stein and then some, has never been so much appreciated in New York as he might be, but that is because his things have never been nicely translated and the original is too frightfully difficult for the ordinary run of students. But M. Eluard's "Here beings live on the edge of light, on the shores so often empty, of the dreaming eye" is excellent and will be sure to win him friends. Also, possibly, some for Man Ray.

THE NEW YORK SUN, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1936.

MORE OR LESS CONCERNED WITH SURREALISM



"Fountainhead," from the painting by Giorgio de Chirico, at the Museum of Modern Art.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC4

Series.Folder:

42

ART COMMENT

By JEROME KLEIN

ART GOES GAGA
AS SURREALISTS
RETURN IN FORCEMuseum of Modern Art Re-
sembles Penny Arcade With
Show of Fantastic ObjectsOLDER HISTORICAL FORMS
OF GROTESQUE TRACED

Bearded grapes, fur-lined spoons, small houses, "exquisite corpses".... Penny Arcade? No, Museum of Modern Art. Exhibition of "Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism."

The cast: Leonardo da Vinci, Rube Goldberg, Albrecht Durer, Walt Disney, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Honoré Daumier, Man Ray, Hieronymus Bosch, Alexander Calder, Hans Holbein, James Thurber, Max Ernst, Joan Miro, Giorgio di Chirico, Peter Blume, et al.

Time: elastic (see Dali).
Mood: dizzier and dizzier.
Place: Erewhon.

But by my long gray false face I must be serious, for this is, in the words of Alfred H. Barr Jr., "a serious affair and for many it (Surrealism) is more than an art movement; it is a philosophy, a way of life, a cause to which some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age are giving themselves with consuming devotion." So, to the business.

New Kind of Fantasy

First, be it noted, this rich display of the irrational covers the period since the rise of a modern rational interpretation of the world. In the work of Bosch and others we see belated survivals of that grotesquerie and diabolism spawned by medieval Christian supernaturalism and moral dualism. But a new kind of fantasy appears as a byplay in the growing scientific mastery of nature. With trick perspective, images done from curved-surface mirrors, Renaissance artists exhibit the grotesque as an intellectual aspect of the phenomenal. Thus their fantasy is simply a playful invasion of the rational, achieved by that very science which governs their view of life.

Expose Distortion
Daumier and Goya use the grotesque to expose distortion and brutalizing of human character through social exploitation.

With the twentieth century, age of super-science, fantasy flowers furiously in Dada and its only-begotten Surrealism. How do we explain this contradiction? Unquestionably it is rooted in our social contradictions. And we must remember that inability or unwillingness to examine them objectively has driven even scientists into mysticism.

Georges Hugnet has called Dada "the sickness of the world." Actually it was a disease restricted to the intelligentsia. It arose among

them during the Great War. Surrounded by a world gone mad, Bohemian artists and writers answered social chaos with a deliberate cult of nonsense and confusion. It was not surprising that they put hair in the soup and a mustache on Mona Lisa and that in Germany they formed the rag-tag fail to the revolutionary political movement.

Dada evaporated into thin air in post-war Europe, but not before it had sown the seeds of Surrealism. While Dada had been purely negative, Surrealism proclaimed the only reality to be the realm of eruptive fantasy, "the immense, undetermined region over which reason does not extend its protective rate."

Fantasy Out in Cold

Despite the Surrealist effort to discredit objective reality, under social stress its internal consistency could not be maintained. So objective reality was again recognized with revolutionary proclamations.

This left fantasy out in the cold. But Breton and Dali came to the rescue with a balancing act that established a necessary relation between reason and nonsense. Were it

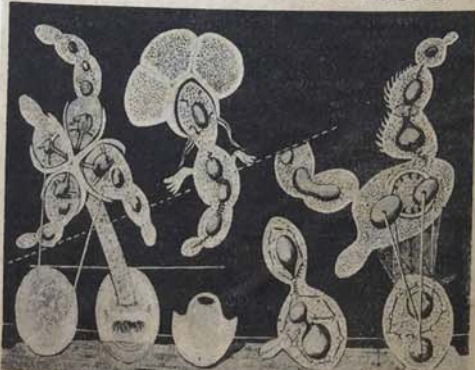
not for this heroic act, Surrealism would be dead!

Fantasy necessarily has played a very large part in the art of our time. It is the valid expression of artists who are better equipped to express personal and general frustration than to formulate situations more clearly. It has played a legitimate part in the art of Chirico, Picasso, Klee, Ernst, Miro, Dali and others.

But when the cult of individual aberration is made programmatic, when the most unutterable bores can throw together a bromstick and a tin pan and have it exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art as a notable Surrealist document, let us observe, "We are not amused."

Let us grant that Salvador Dali has applied an admirable ingenuity to his little esthetic peep show. But we know, as Mr. Dali and his Surrealist confreres do, that there is a much bigger drama on the boards. And we also know that the Surrealists' claim to be vitally concerned with the issue of that drama and to be working for the advancement of its solution, is not borne out by their clinging to outworn antics.

WHEELS GO 'ROUND 'N' AROUND



"The Gramineous Bicycle Garnished With Bells the Pluffed Grey-beards and the Echinoderms Bending the Spine to Look for Carresses" is the exact title. Max Ernst is responsible for making it and the Museum of Modern Art for showing it.

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1936

ART TURNED INTO A
VERITABLE PUZZLE

By ROYAL CORTISZOZ

THE Museum of Modern Art continues to perform its useful function, that of serving as a kind of testing laboratory to which the public may turn for illustrations of the latest movement or "ism." Its current exhibition assembles nearly seven hundred examples of "Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism." Mr. Barr, the Director, points out that in offering this display "the Museum does not intend to set its stamp of approval upon a particular aspect of modern art any more than it did when it presented last year its retrospective exhibition of Cubism and Abstract Art." Nevertheless, he remarks in a preface to the catalogue that "Surrealism as an art movement is a serious affair and for many it is more than an art movement; it is a philosophy, a way of life, a cause to which some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age are giving themselves with consuming devotion." If this is the case then so much the worse for the painters and poets, and for the "many." For my own part, I find in Surrealism the reduction of the modernistic urge to absurdity, its subsidence into the morass of puzzlement. If it is anything else it is what a conspicuous foreign Surrealist told me it had undoubtedly become, a trick, a stunt. In other days, not so very long ago, the desire of the Salonier to attract attention to himself by painting his picture on a large scale and in a sensational manner was slantly described as an ambition to "make a hole in the wall." That form of exhibitionism may not be a thousand miles away from the habit of the Surrealist.

A Vain S. O. S. Sent to the Old Masters

IN ONE respect the organization of the exhibition has been made a shade too ingenious. Back in 1913, when the memorable Armory Show was being put together—an affair for which one could not be too grateful—somebody had the bright idea of including a couple of drawings of Ingres, as though there were some sort of affinity between that Raphael-esque classicist and the painter of the "Nude Descending the Stairs." It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that some such search after shadowy ancestral sanctions must have led to the appearance in the present exhibition of "Fantastic Art" as it has manifested itself in the fifteenth and other centuries. But it is idle to invoke the great names of Leonardo and Durer to validate the claims of the Surrealist. It is not by their obscurities that either of them is remembered, and as much may be said of later types, like Goya and Blake. All these, it is true, and painters such as Hieronymus Bosch, left some baffling problems behind them. Nay, one of the loveliest pictures in the world, Giorgione's "Tempest," remains an enigma to this day. But the occasional painting of an enigma in the earlier periods of art does not necessarily justify the deliberate framing of enigmas in our own time. Not all the seeming precedents that exist can remove the modernist from his precarious footing on decidedly debatable ground.

The Grand Isolation of Dada

IT IS to be noted, moreover, that from the standpoint of the modernist precedent is worthless. Originally prepared for publication in the catalogue, but arriving too late for that and therefore printed in the

"Bulletin," there are essays on Dada and Surrealism by M. Georges Hugnet, a young French oracle. He says, for example, this: "With the advent of the War and its atmosphere of breakdown, Dada was born. It subverted all values and made a clean sweep of everything." Further on he remarks that Dada is ageless and has no parents, and that when it turned up in Zurich in 1916 it did so in such confusion that "it's hard to tell it apart from its enemy, Art." Thus one gets a little forlorn, but really to make progress one must turn to the exhibits themselves.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

And then what do we see? For one thing, an actual wire cage containing jumps of real sugar, a masterpiece by Marcel Duchamp which is entitled "Why Not Sneeze?" It might be argued that this is an extreme case, but in essence it is representative of the blague which prevails in this exhibition. It is in that spirit that Picasso must have conceived his deplorable designs, such as the geometric "Head" of 1913, the ridiculous "Seated Woman" of 1927, and the even more grotesque "Metamorphosis (Bather)" of 1929. Metamorphosis, indeed! And it is not the metamorphosis of nature into something true and beautiful, but the metamorphosis of life into something false and ugly. All through the exhibition one encounters work that is repellent when it is not simply a bore.

Surrealism, Plausible and Implausible

SURREALISM, I gather—though I cannot guarantee it—is a state of mind closely allied with dreamland. As the resourceful M. Hugnet observes: "As the earth dreams its dreams of stone, so man from the very first has taken refuge in dreams as in a magic rock around which life, the elements and the stars revolve." It is prettily said and points to a tenable hypothesis. But for mankind, contemplating the outgivings of the dreamers, everything depends upon the nature of the dreams, the artistic investiture provided for them, the caliber of the artist. Can he so transmit his dream that it will somehow rouse interest and give pleasure, as Giorgione transmitted his dream in the picture mentioned a moment ago? In a few instances, upon the present occasion, he shows that he can do so. I shall never know what the German painter Richard Oelze means by his "Daily Torments," a strange conglomeration of animal and other forms, with a human face peering out from the scene, but by his technique I am persuaded that he is at least an authentic craftsman. So in the case of Salvador Dali (who, by the way, is having an exhibition of his own at the Julien Levy gallery) we have to deal with an unmistakable talent. He is an executant in the polished, meticulous tradition of that otherwise very different type, Matissonier, capable of extraordinarily skillful miniaturistic effects. He is also capable of a certain breadth, and his "Puzzle of Autumn," with its fine landscape and luminous sky, is undoubtedly the best thing in the show.

There are other persuasive figures here. De Chirico is one of them, in his architectural moments, not when he dips into the merely bizarre, as in the "Troubadour." In the section

devoted to "artists independent of the Dada-Surrealist movements" our own Georgia O'Keefe strikes an arresting note with her "Cow's Skull"

and Pierre Roy also leaves a favorable impression through his studies of still life. These latter are recondit enough, but it is an open secret that in spite of former association with the Surrealists he is not so much identified with their mystery today as given to painting inanimate objects simply because he has them about him and they save the cost of living models. He, like Dali and Oelze, is sound in his workmanship, knows how to draw and how to paint. The same might be said of divers others represented, but alas for the matter upon which they wreak their dexterity! It is sad stuff. Furthermore, the men of talent are few. They affirm themselves amidst a vast welter of mediocrity.

The reader may wonder why, after traversing that welter, I have not disengaged from it some central idea, some central principle, governing so widespread an activity. In reply I am moved to repeat the old story of the man who, after dining too well, was bidding good night to his host and asked him where he would find a cab. "You will find two at the corner," he was told. "Take the first one. The

second one isn't there." It is, perhaps, best to touch upon this exhibition in a mood of levity. After all, the artists have had their fun. Why not the commentator? And besides, who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel? Only these are not harmless butterflies. M. Duchamp's biographical note in the catalogue describes him as "artist and anti-artist." That is what the exhibition essentially stands for—anti-art—in standing for distortion and willful obscurity, for the grotesque and preposterous. Its influence, if it has any, can be only of a disintegrating nature.

Puzzle of Autumn



From the painting by Salvador Dali, at the Museum of Modern Art



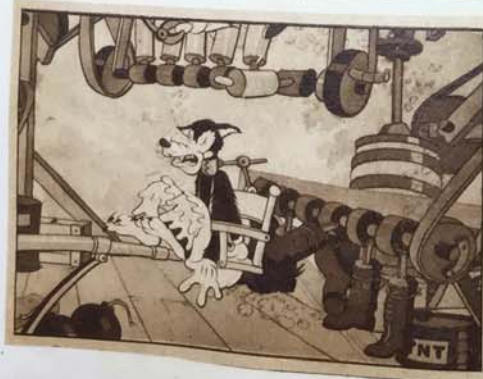
Seated Woman

From the painting by Pablo Picasso, at the Museum of Modern Art

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: ACG	Series.Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------



Segment of a Mask Lent by the Artist, Wallace Putnam
As large as a door is this creation. A ring makes one eye; a bead another. A pipe and slipper rest on the eyebrows



Disneyism
Included in the exhibition is this frame, "Wolf Pacifier," lent by Walt and Roy Disney. The exhibition includes the work of ancient monks, Rube Goldberg, Picasso and William Hogarth.

Fantastic Art and Dada

Until January 17 these specimens of surrealism, dadaism and fantastic art, with 700 others produced during the last three centuries, are included in the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. Broad-minded, the trustees of the museum, at 11 West Fifty-third Street, printed on their invitations the adjectives projected below.



NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1936



"Eye," an Oil on Canvas by Rene Magritte, Lent by Man Ray, Paris
One of the most striking canvasses at the Museum of Modern Art.
Soichi Sanami



"Landscape Head"—Double Image Art of the Sixteenth Century
Held this way the painting is a landscape oddity. Held vertically the foliage becomes chin whiskers on the head of a pop-eyed man. The author is protected by the mists of antiquity.
Soichi Sanami

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42



Reclining Figure in Lead, by Henry Moore

zeichi Sunami

The Battle of the Surrealists

Salvador Dali's Engagement at the Julien Levy Gallery.

The best place this week to overhear chance remarks—if you collect chance remarks—is the Julien Levy Gallery, 602 Madison avenue, for it is there that Salvador Dali, the surrealist, is showing his latest and most astounding pieces. Whatever else you may say about surrealism it sure is a great incentive to conversation, and the choice bits you overhear are always illuminating.

I meant to have taken along my notebook to the fashionable vernissage at the Modern Museum's show of surrealism last week in order to jot down the flotsam and jetsam of the occasion, but forgot to do so, and so my precarious memory only permits me to offer you two "overhears" from that event. Of course, I intend to haunt regularly the Julien - Levy - Salvador - Dali show, with my notebook, for these things that people say have their bearings upon the pictures, and will be very useful in judging the effect of this new art upon the laity. (That word "laity" reminds me, somehow, of the Archbishop of Canterbury. I wonder what the Archbishop of Canterbury would think of Salvador Dali's pictures.)

But first I must tell you what I heard at the Modern Museum. On the stairway of that institution there is at present shown an enormous mask, constructed by an artist named Wallace Putnam, and ornamented with a strange miscellany of household utensils, including a mousetrap, bits of wire, hair brushes, &c., and as I was going up I met an intensely respectable

couple coming down. The man had a solid, substantial air, most probably a banker, a man with an instinctive feeling for values, and after gazing in awe-struck astonishment at the mask for a moment, he turned to his wife and said, unsmilingly: "Never throw anything away." Almost at the same moment two young men passed me on the stairway going up, and one of them had a wild look in his eyes. His friend asked him, in consternation, "What's the matter?" and he replied: "I don't know but I don't feel right." Of course, neither one of these "overhears" takes you very far into the depths of surrealism, but by the time you have amassed a hundred such revelations, I feel pretty sure you will have sufficient material to take the measure of the movement completely.

But to get back to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the laity: I think it would reassure his Grace the Archbishop if somebody would inform him that there is a whole lot of the Academy in Mr. Dali's art. The criticism that is most generally leveled at the Academy is that it depends too much upon subject matter, but Mr. Dali certainly depends a lot upon subject matter, too. Indeed, there is more subject matter in one of Mr. Dali's works than in an entire Academy

exhibition put together, even when the said Academy exhibition includes several compositions by Harry W. Watrous.

Mr. Dali's great masterpiece called "Suburbs of the 'paranoiac-critical' afternoon (on the outskirts of European history)" is calculated to keep any earnest student busy for an entire afternoon deciphering it. This picture is not only Mr. Dali's masterpiece, but it is the incontestable masterpiece of surrealism to date; and that statement is intended to convey the information that it also overtops anything that the old master in this line, Hieronymus Bosch, ever put forth in the way of horror. I don't know much about Hieronymus Bosch, but I have always suspected that he lived in a jittery time, something like ours, with all sorts of uncertainties about his finances, the state of his soul, &c., &c., and consequently had a perfect right to have nightmares. Besides, it was before the advent of Dr. Freud of Vienna, and he did not run the additional risk of being psychoanalyzed.

But, anyway, Mr. Dali goes him miles better. There are some shapes that look like arms clutching things in the picture, and if one thing in a dream is more disturbing than another, it is the fear that monstrous and incredibly forceful hands are about to clutch you; and Mr. Dali poses this amorphous shape in front of a landscape that out-views those of Maxfield Parrish in literalness of detail, and here and there, in places where they horrify you most, the artist drapes bits of raw meat.

This must be the very picture that the artist described in a communication to the Academy and which was published in the Academy's Commonplace Book last month, as follows: "I used to balance two broiled lamb chops on my wife's shoulders and then by observing the movement of tiny shadows produced by the accident of the meat while the sun was setting, I was able to obtain images sufficiently lucid and appetizing for an exhibit in New York."

The movement of the tiny shadows has been correctly apprehended in this picture, just as the artist says, but once the eye catches sight of "the accident of the meat while the sun was setting" then firm conviction seizes one that it will be hopeless to thresh this matter out with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Hieronymus Bosch? Yes, perhaps. But not Salvador Dali. He's too near our present predicaments.

H. McR.

THE NEW YORK SUN, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1936.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1936.

THE NEW DALIS AGAIN

Surrealist Sneezes on Flying Trapeze— Show at the Julien Levy Gallery

SUBLIME is surely the word for the giant grab bag at the Museum of Modern Art (reviewed last week). To it naught could be added, from it naught could be taken away without a pang of excruciating distress. But, if paradoxical, the fact remains that when you have finished that show and learned to say Dada as well as the next man—perhaps almost as well as the Dali themselves—you are not yet through. Unless you have seen the Miro at the Pierre Matisse and until you have seen the new Dalis at the Julien Levy, you cannot, with justice to all concerned, say that you are washed up.

The souvenir catalogue at the Dali show is quite special and sells for a quarter. The face of it, with

a treasure trove of little accented reproductions restrained by snaps, must not be more explicitly described in these columns. On the back of it are listed the titles of the paintings, which by now have a quite familiar ring: such titles as "Three Young Surrealist Women Holding in Their Arms the Skins of an Orchestra," "Autumnal Cannibalism," "Necrophilic Spring," "The Man With the Head of Blue Hortensias," "A Chemist Lifting With Precaution the Cuticle of a Grand Piano," "Feminine Head Which Has the Form of a Battle," "A Trombone and a Sofa Fashioned Out of Saliva," "Soft Construction With Boiled Beans" (this is dated 1936 and held to be a premonition of civil war), "Suburbs of the

"Paranoiac-Critical" Afternoon (on the Outskirts of European History") and "Dream Puts Her Hand on a Man's Shoulder."

So far, of course, as ideology goes, all this is quite beyond debate. It is beyond life and death. It is beyond everything. And yet, as Gertrude Stein might say, it is it is that it is that.

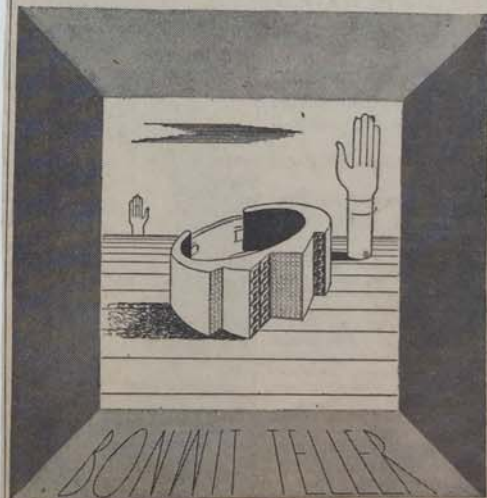
On the craft side, Dali has outdone himself. In all seriousness, he can paint like an angel. I do not think he has ever painted as well as he is painting now. But he is a prime minimalist dotting the "i's" and crossing the "t's" of a lunar enchantment. And his moon is made of green cheese and it stinks, as Samuel Johnson is said once to have said, referring to himself. That, I suppose, is one way of exploiting—to quote a line from Mr. Levy's just published book on surrealism—"the mechanisms of inspiration."

"New shivers," the Comte de Lautreamont once remarked, "are running through the intellectual atmosphere: it only needs courage to face them." And, as the proverb saith, "Elephants are contagious."

E. A. J.

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1936

Surrealist impression of the perfect Christmas gift



JEWELLED MANACLE. Wide band bracelet with brilliant stone facades, 45.00 Main Floor, Fifth Ave. at 56th St.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series/Folder:
	ACG	42

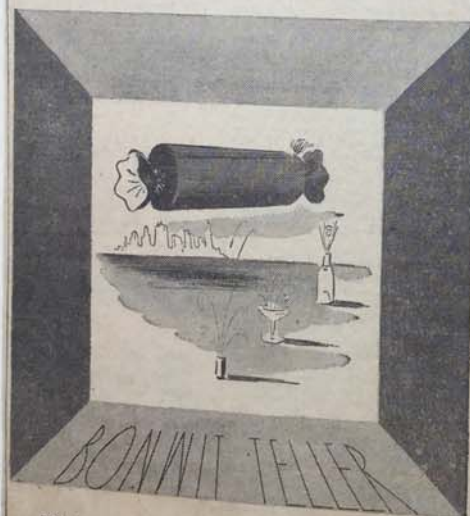
FIFTH AVENUE AT FIFTY-SIXTH STREET



Inspired by the sensational shows of surrealist paintings at the Museum of Modern Art and the Julien Levy Gallery, we have taken a surrealist theme for our Fifth Avenue windows today and all week.

Dresses in mysterious black pierced with surrealist color. In each window, a collage depicting such holiday moods as "Down after New Year's Eve," "Times Square at Midnight," "SALVADOR DALI made the sketch which inspired the striking window called 'She was a Surrealist Women like a Figure in a Dream.'"

Surrealist impression of the perfect Christmas gift



BON BON SNAPPER BAG, New English import handbag with prodigious zipper, 25.00 Main Floor, Fifth Ave. at 56th St.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1936.

IN THE REALM OF ART: BAYING AT A PURPLE MOON

FANTASY IN PERSPECTIVE

The Museum of Modern Art Opens Show Of Dada and Surrealism, Old and New

By EDWARD ALDEN JEWELL

And truly in my youth, I suffered much extremity for (art), very near this. —Polonius.

OUT of nihilism came Dada. Nihilism is almost as old as the human race, but Dada, its twentieth century bundle of neurasthenic chills and fever, uttered the first tentative yell of protest against every thing on earth in the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich about two years after the World War started.

Dada just happened, and yet, to borrow Georges Hugnet's italics, no one has a right to ignore it. Monsieur Hugnet draws for us a parallel. He says it is as if one day "the Bébé Cadum had come down from its poster to sit beside you in the bus." Tristan Tzara gave the new gadget its name. He is said to have discovered it in the dictionary, a book that even the most vehement iconoclasts have found useful from time to time. Monsieur Hugnet reports that "Dada was born from what it hated. At first it was commonly thought to be an artistic and literary movement or a mal du siècle. But Dada was the sickness of the world." And it is grander by a good deal, one perceives, to cope with the sickness of the macrocosm than to cope with just that of even the most fascinating little microcosm that ever was.

The charter Dadaists could not have organized to fulminate against the Treaty of Versailles, since that fantastic nostrum had not yet been conceived; nor was their bitter mirth of 1916 provoked by post-war inflation. But the later Dadaists and their descendant Surrealists may reasonably be supposed, as Alfred Barr suggests, to have held and to continue to hold society responsible for the war, the treaty, the inflation, together with rearmament "and a variety of social, political and economic follies which have made the realities of Christendom in their eyes a spectacle of madness just as shocking as their most outrageous super-realities may be to the outside world."

Dada, child of disillusion and despair, believed in nothing; believed, it was wont to babble, not even in itself. Surrealism, rising up out of the ashes of still-born laughter, held at least a belief in the unconquerable soul of Thaumaturgy, with its alluring cloak of night-mare. That may have seemed all at length, that was left in which one could believe. Yet it was enough. It was quite enough to keep one's clever brushes busy. And the Surrealists, yes, even the antecedent Dadaists, have been ever, upon the whole, a cheerful lot. If they wooed Lethe it was with a bold and merry spirit.

TO be "subversive" and "exasperating"—that was the great desideratum. It was a noble end. Did their Achilles armature lack a heel-plate? If so, vulnerability lay in the brash, unprecedented freshness of their little joke on life and on art. But lo! there was a heel-plate. Artists had revelled in phantasmagoria before. Five hundred years ago artists—some of them with formidable reputations—had looked at the macrocosm and found it not in robust health. This collateral fact the organizers of the mammoth show at the Museum of Modern Art were quick to appreciate. There was, there could be dramatized, a long and bolstering perspective. For art that is bemused and teched and dithery and (as applying to one's upper floor) ratified is as old as the Pyramids of Ghizeh.

So into neat alignment were brought such spoils as the fifteenth century Arcimboldo's "Summer," a portrait composed of fruits and vegetables and grain, and product of the same artist's "tradition," a picture that is a landscape if hung one way and a head if hung another; such chronicles as the famous "Bewitched Groom," a woodcut, by Baldung, and Durer's "Man in Despair" (but why not his superb "Melancholia"?), and the Giovanni di Paolo "Shipwreck"; the laughing-mirror grotesque, which may represent Charles V and is

possibly by an artist of the sixteenth century German school, a "Temptation of St. Anthony" by Peter Huys the Fleming and, to wind up at this point our abbreviated list of old masters, the very fine "Descent Into Hell," attributed to the school of Hieronymus Bosch, lent by the Metropolitan.

While some of the prior confessions may be as perverse and bizarre as any of the modern, usually there seems a method in the antique madness that seldom applies to contemporary serio-comic agonizing. The "Descent Into Hell," for instance, might be called quite as vividly lucid and, in a sulphuric sense, verisimilitudinous, as Dante's "Inferno." But for traces of any such cogent logic we may search in vain in ninety-nine out of a hundred of the irrational products of our own time.

AS the catalogue makes clear, not all of the moderns included in this show have taken an active part in the movements known as Dadaism and Surrealism. Nor, it may be, have all of them consciously provided material that could be thought, in the stricter sense, pertinent. Yet while it is true that certain of the inclusions prompt a feeling of momentary surprise, it is safe to conclude that everything, as here orientated, does belong.

By bringing in Georgia O'Keeffe's "Black Abstraction" and by giving prominence to the work of Pierre Roy (so rich in subtle overtones) and of Chirico at his earlier best, Mr. Barr enlarges the horizon of a theme that has tended no doubt to become in the popular mind restricted. There is no nonsense and there is no corymbic extravagance in Pierre Roy, one of the half dozen or so really fine artists the cause can muster. His dream-haunted and often very beautiful canvases lift Surrealism to a high imaginative plane, from which descent to the frivolous, the incoherent, the paranoiac, the downright daffed appears, by virtue of the contrasts it summons, the more startling.

When Marcel Duchamp, that tirelessly inventive "scientist" of the Left Bank, dropped three threads each a meter long upon the floor and preserved the "outlines," nothing momentous resulted. The celebrated malaise of our epoch when neither helped nor hindered when he constructed his rotating apparatus, which works with a dynamo in the entrance hall and will hypnotize you if you aren't alert to the

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

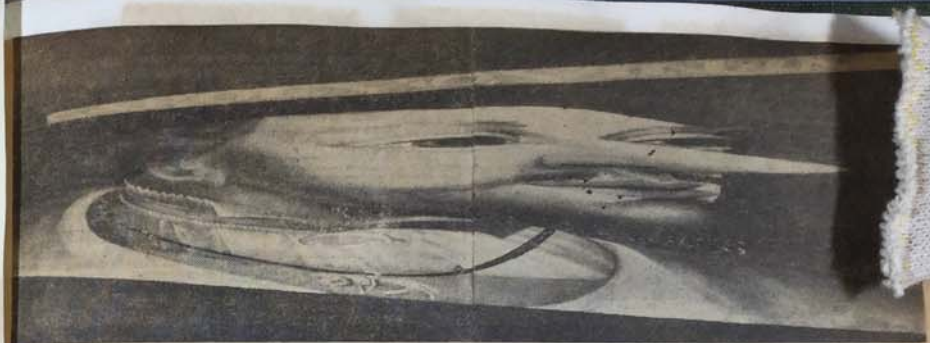
danger it conceals. But there is sensitive quality in the "King and Queen Traversed by Swift Nudes" and in that strange contrivance called "The Bride" (both of 1912)—just as there can be genuine linear rhythm in designs by André Masson and exquisite brushwork in the dislocations of Salvador Dalí.

Viewed as a staggering whole, this opulent circus at the Museum of Modern Art may be said to contain a great deal more artistry than art. After all, art must do more than thumb its wit at us and utter a cabalistic Fee-fi-fo-fum. As a serious contribution, the show of

the fantastic, the dadaistic and the surrealist is important alone because it is equipped to place on visual record movements in modern art that have become historical. The artists who ask us to believe that Dadaism is still alive and has a functioning rôle to play in the affairs of men and women here and now are merely enlisted in the ranks of those who follow an out-moded fashion. Contemporary aspirants to fame who devise their little imitative, academic tricks and toys and think with satisfaction that they have done a good day's work in a world that craves new light and desperately needs real

heroes, are but dancers at the wake.

Yet (not to end on so lugubrious a note) the exhibition itself, considered as a devastating and potent whole, is perhaps the most incredibly mad divertissement the town has ever seen. If you would go insane quite pleasantly and painlessly, let me recommend that you beg of one of the attendants a lump of 1921 sugar out of Mr. Duchamp's sneeze-trap, drop it into Mr. Oppenheim's fur cup, stir well, and then sit down to disintegrate at the hearth of Mr. Terry's "Fireplace With Waterfall."



"Charles V." (?) 1533, oil on panel, by an unknown artist of the German School (?). Lent by Jacques Lipchitz, Paris. This and the other pictures reproduced are from the exhibition of "Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism," at the Museum of Modern Art.



"Object," 1936. Fur covered plate, cup and spoon, by Meret Oppenheim. Lent by the artist.

"Agog," object, 1935, by Wallace Putnam. Lent by the artist.



"The Elephant Celebes," 1921, oil on canvas, by Max Ernst. Lent by Paul Eluard, Paris.



"Object," 1936, wood, still life, parrot, &c., by Joan Miro. Lent by Mrs. Kenneth Simpson.

THE NEW YORK TIMES,

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 1937.

SURREAL INSANITY

Very puzzling indeed to the lay public, and perhaps even to the surrealists themselves, is the anger of Miss KATHLEEN DREHER. Miss DREHER had loaned some paintings for the surrealist exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, and was indignant to discover that pictures by the insane and children were also included. She has refused, therefore, to lend works requested by the museum to the exhibition when it is circulated to institutions in other parts of the country.

But why? Because, she feels, "sincerity is lacking" when a movement is "held up to the derision of the public" by mingling the works of sane, insane and children. But what is sincerity and what is sanity? These are the very questions that the surrealists raise. A surrealist painter insists that he is both sincere and sane when he paints a watch dripping over the side of a table like a blob of molasses, or a man whose head is simply one end of a dumbbell, or a live woman sitting placidly with a square hole the size of a window cut through the center of her back through which one glimpses a beautiful view of the sea.

It is all very puzzling indeed. Why does Miss DREHER merely like the work of painters who pretend to be insane and become indignant when she sees the real thing?

SURREALISM AND OUR DAY

'A Landmark and a Criticism of Society,'
Declares British Writer on Theatre

ONE of the events of the coming art season will be the big Surrealist exhibition promised by the Museum of Modern Art. Meanwhile, as Miss Harris reported some weeks ago in these columns, London has been having a surrealist Summer. Ashley Dukes, who contributes an article entitled "The Scene in Europe" to the recent all-Soviet issue of Theatre Arts Monthly, concedes that London's surrealist demonstration has nothing directly to do "with the theatre that functions nightly in and about Shaftesbury Avenue." On the other hand, "with the drama of our time and consciousness," he believes, "it has much to do," since "the Surrealists, whatever their absolute merits, are a landmark and a criticism of our society."

Mr. Dukes goes on to say: "Naturally some Londoners recall that a quarter of a century ago, in a Bond Street gallery hardly a stone's throw from the present exhibition, the Post-Impressionists made their first bow. I certainly remember that occasion well, and the throngs of silk-hatted gentlemen and picture-hatted ladies who moved from painting to painting, absorbed in the many and revealing masterpieces that were before them. . . .

"Those Post-Impressionists included a few mediocre talents and even some charlatans among their number, as certain critics noted. But their general achievement was high enough to make one wonder whether in all the centuries of art so much genius could have been assembled and displayed at one time."

WITH such an estimate one may or may not be in complete agreement. At any rate Mr. Dukes's statement that "an immense prestige has accrued to modernism by the uprising of this group of men, chiefly in France, who saw their world afresh and took brush in hand to give it the new significance it urgently demanded," cannot now be esteemed controversial. The above-quoted writer continues:

"Today among the Surrealists are certainly some men as gifted as any of those former moderns. Around their works, in support of the Surrealist principle, are grouped an astonishing collection of assertions and enigmas and a number of undoubted bad jokes. The exhibition is both fashionable, in that it is one of the current amusements of Mayfair, and demonstrative, in that it forms a rallying ground for the young and bearded, the shaggy and self-conscious, and most of the practitioners and camp followers of art who are trying to find in it something more than a pleasurable experience for cultivated people."

"Actually the spectators of the Surrealists are even more exciting as a spectacle than were the spectators of the Post-Impressionists—one could visit the show daily to watch them tactfully, defiantly, doubtfully or hilariously making their way around."

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1936

"The reason for the inclusion of the art of children and the insane as comparative material in the exhibition of fantastic art should therefore be obvious."

Overheard, in terror, at Jack Dempsey's restaurant on Eighth avenue, as two lady patrons worried over a mutual friend: "She's going to commit murder, some day, if she finds a knife in one hand and a man in the other."

The Defenders of Democracy through Louis M. Bailey, national director, put the stamp of approval on the opinions of the committee. He said there were 60,000 members in his organization and that it was nation-wide and non-political.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC9

Series.Folder:

42

THE NEW YORK SUN, TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1937.

BOLTS MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Katherine Dreier Withdraws
Group of Paintings.

CALLS EXHIBIT CONFUSING

She Objects to Work of Insane
Artists and Children.

Katherine S. Dreier, who more than once has been the stormy petrel of New York art circles since she came back from Paris in 1913 and decided to mother modern art in America, has taken a big bite at the Museum of Modern Art.

Miss Dreier has withdrawn her own and sixteen other paintings by members of the Societe Anonyme, from the Surrealist exhibition which has just closed a most successful run at the museum, and is to start on a tour of the country within a few days. Miss Dreier says she objects to having the pictures that she controls exhibited alongside of insane artists and children.

Miss Dreier, big, blond and somewhat formidable, sat in her studio at the Great Northern Hotel on West Fifty-seventh street today, and accused the modern museum of being exhibitionistic, with no true regard for serious art.

"I inquired," said Miss Dreier in the charming accent which she acquired abroad, and not in Brooklyn where she was born of regular American parents, "if this strange policy was to be continued, of exhibiting works of the sane, the insane and children. When I found that such was the case I was forced to withdraw my own paintings and those of the Societe Anonyme as I could not permit myself to be associated with an exhibition which was so confusing to the public."

Defends Museum Policy.

To Miss Dreier's charges, Alfred H. Barr Jr., director of the museum, replied good naturedly that a group of pictures by children and the insane were included in the exhibition because of their interest for Surrealists, whose objective is to explore the realm of dreams, fantasy and the sub-conscious. Children and the insane, he said, give a free and uninhibited expression of this irrational world, whereas the Surrealists strive to do the same thing consciously.

"In some ways, therefore, their work is analogous," Mr. Barr said. "That explains the reason for its inclusion, and should be obvious. It was catalogued separately, listed as comparative material, and should give no offense to the natural and normal. So far as I know only one artist has taken any offense."

As the mother of modern art in America, Miss Dreier feels strongly on this matter of modern art, carrying connotations of insanity to the general public. It was in 1913, after making quite a reputation for herself as a painter of religious subjects in Brooklyn, that Miss Dreier discovered Modern Art.

Had Painted Conventionally.

Up until that time she had painted representationally in a rather conventional manner. (Representational means so that the subject matter was generally recognizable, and objects much like those seen in real life.) But when Marcel Duchamp in 1913 rocked the New World with his famous Armory exhibit of a "Nude Descending a Staircase" where the public could see neither nude nor staircase, Miss Dreier became a devoted champion of modern art, and spent a good many years abroad, returning from time to time to encourage the movement in her own country, which until then had lagged far behind Europe in discovering abstractionism.

Miss Dreier is the first to admit that she and her group, the Societe Anonyme, have often been held up to ridicule by the Academics, and have been cited as examples of "insanity in art" in serious newspapers, magazines and art histories. And after all of these years of trying to educate the American public to understand that there is nothing freakish or insane about abstractionism (Picasso and his school), now comes the American Museum of Modern Art, and merely to attract a crowd, offers wares which it frankly labels, if not insane, at least "psychopathic."

She Refers to Miro.

"And I can not stand by and see serious work included in such a potpourri," she declared. In taking this step, she is a champion of Hogarth, Blake, Goya, and other serious artists of the past who were included in the show, alongside of the artists who ransack everything from the ashcan and the sewing basket to the carpenter's tool chest for their materials.

"Take that thing of Miro's," said Miss Dreier severely. "I was one of the first to appreciate him in America. I'm sure he meant it merely as a joke, and Heaven knows where the museum got hold of the thing. From some dealer, no doubt. I'm sure that Miro never dreamed it would be shown seriously."

The "thing" referred to was a composition by the famous French modernist made of a stuffed parrot (real), sitting above what appeared to be a glass thermometer, or at any rate, a glass cylinder inside of which was a woman's leg amputated from a department store manikin. Other odds and ends from his wife's sewing basket, if he has a wife, were grouped about this.

Uses Only Genuine Paint.

Miss Dreier herself has never used anything but genuine paint to achieve her effects, although she admits that a good modern artist could use any materials he had a mind to, for the basis of the movement is to unhackle art from conventional ideas. Nevertheless, she's sure the Museum selected this bit of whimsy by a great artist merely to attract the rabble, who wouldn't even know it was satirical.

The two pictures of Miss Dreier's, which won't go traveling with the

"insane art" of the Surrealist show are "The Circus" and "Irritation," both abstractions, consisting largely of spheres. "Irritation" has as its central figure a planet, probably the earth, and passing it in mid-heaven all too close for comfort is what might be the moon or might be the eye of God. It looks rather more like an eye than the moon, but might be the man in the moon.

Abstract Artist Will Not Show With Mad Ones

Katherine Dreier Withdraws
8 Works as Surrealist Exhibition Takes to Road

Held Up to 'Derision'

Barr Apologizes; Points Out
Meticulous Segregation

Miss Katherine S. Dreier, New York artist, announced yesterday that eight items of abstract art—abstract to the point of baffling completely the average man—had been withdrawn from the exhibit of the Museum of Modern Art because she did not want them in an exhibition that included also the work of insane persons and children.

She had lent the items from her own collection and that of the Societe Anonyme, of which she is president, before she knew that the museum was going to include paintings and drawings by the insane and by children for comparison with items of fantastic, dadaistic and surrealist art.

She said she had not made a fuss about it while the exhibition was in view here, because she did not want to embarrass the museum. Last Sunday the exhibition closed, and starting Friday, Philadelphia will have an opportunity to make what they can out of the phantasmagorical collection of hundreds of items among which a fur-lined tea-cup and saucer vies for prominence with a bird cage full of sugar lumps and titled "Why Not Sneezes?"

A Canary in the Bird Cage

Miss Dreier put her foot down about Philadelphia, or for that matter Boston, Milwaukee, San Francisco and other cities the exhibition will visit.

"I don't want the American public confused by seeing real works of art placed on exhibition with creations of insane persons and children," she said last night in her suite at the Great Northern Hotel, 118 West Fifty-seventh Street. In her living room hung a bird cage, in which, of all things, there was a canary.

Miss Dreier, a grandmotherly woman who can express her point of view in language that has a bite in it, felt "that sincerity is lacking in the way the Museum of Modern Art staged its exhibit, and instead of educating the people, as museums should, it has actually brought confusion to the minds of many persons. By making a meaningless potpourri of the products of the sane, the insane and of children, they have held modern art up to the derision of the public."

No Offense Intended

In answer to Miss Dreier, Alfred H. Barr Jr., director of the museum, last night said "no offense to mature and normal artists was intended" by the inclusion of the paintings and drawings by children and the insane. The latter, he said, were hung in a separate room under the heading "comparative material."

"Children and the insane live at least a part of their time in an imaginary world," he explained, "quite apart from the world of everyday actuality. Ordinarily this world of fantasy is unattainable to the rest of us except in dreams. The boldness and freedom of a child's imagination, and the frequent spontaneity of his technique have interested those living artists such as the surrealists, who are attempting to explain the irrational world of fantasy, dreams and the subconscious."

Miss Dreier stressed the point, however, that the artists of her group, of the Societe Anonyme, which she and Marcel Duchamp founded in 1920, composed their abstractions on a sound artistic basis, following the established rules of art.

"How can an insane person or a child, who knows nothing of those rules," she asked, "be placed on a par with an artist? What they do may have a certain psychological interest or value, but including works by them in an exhibition of modern art certainly will not help to clarify the problems for the general public."

Among the eight pictures that Miss

Dreier has withdrawn are two oil paintings of her own, three items by Duchamps, two by Ribemont-Dessaignes and one by Kurt Schwitters. Among the Duchamps items is an electrically-operated "revolving apparatus" constructed of glass and metal. On the arms of the machine are painted concentric rings, and when it is whirling it is reputed to have a semi-hypnotic influence on the spectator.

Man Ray, closely associated with Miss Dreier and Duchamps in the Societe Anonyme, has not joined Miss Dreier as yet in her revolt, and his pictures will travel with the other artistic abstractions to Philadelphia.

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1937

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	AC4	42

THE SURREALISTS are exulting that this is Their Year all over America.

Their opening gun is to be fired by Max Ernst at the Julien Levy Galleries (the warlike phrase is Mr. Levy's, and shows how militant he is on the subject of surrealism). Ernst takes old engravings and snips and pastes like an *enfant terrible*. Not the self-conscious smarty, but like the really terrible children in "High Wind in Jamaica," remember? Grave; polite; and full of secrets which would make a sissy of the sphinx. We reproduce Ernst's *collage* below because we love it—because it scares the living daylights out of us—and because full many a time have we felt like that poor hog-tied guy in the middle, waking suddenly from fitful slumber on a nocturnal, wagon-lit-less journey through the French provinces. . . . A Chirico show precedes Ernst at the Levy Galleries, but Chirico will ram a broken Ionic column down your throat these days if you call him a surrealist. His most recent canvases, by the way, have been painted right here in New York, though you wouldn't know it especially. Chirico has gone back to his earlier manner, with perhaps a bit more dash and color. Two or three years back we were whimpering that we had had our fill of Chirico's horses and Chirico's ruins; but lately, reflecting on

the ghastly havoc in Spain, and the loss of so many of the world's most glorious can-

vases, we are grateful for an artist who is not only enormously productive, but who

has the courage to repeat himself. *Vive* di Chirico and his horses! . . . The sur-

realists are going to do themselves proudest in a great comprehensive show at

the Museum of Modern Art, from December 2nd to January 17th, called

"Surrealism and Fantastic Art." It will be (Continued on page 126)



Harper's Bazaar

NOV-1936

larger, even, than the sensational London surrealist show, and will permit us to study tendencies leading up to surrealism and consequent modifications. The Man Ray painting used as a background to his own fashion photograph on the opposite page will be exhibited. It is called "Observatory Time—The Lovers," is his biggest canvas and was also shown in London. We asked Man Ray for his definition of surrealism, thinking he must have one ready made. He hadn't, and is too profound an artist to pretend or hastily to invent. "Say that the surrealists wilfully (or, better, will-fully?) emphasize the subconscious and dream state in their painting, sculpture and writing," he suggested. We recall André Breton's early definition in the surrealist manifesto, 1924: "... pure psychic automatism, by which means it is proposed to transcribe the real functioning of thought; dictates of thought in the absence of all control exercised by reason, beyond all control esthetic or moral." But by 1929, partly through the advent of Salvador Dali, the surrealists discovered that they could get a more satisfactory translation of the dream world by a more active projection of the dream; the efforts of the surrealists since then have been to give concrete form to the dream wishes. In other words, the surrealists feel themselves now sufficiently masters of their mediums to exercise the prerogative of the artist: selection. They remain grateful to Freud, admit freely that without his work surrealism could never have existed; but they see now that their original approach was too medical, too influenced by psychoanalysis. . . . We wonder if movie fans recall Gary Cooper's shrewd little lecture to the jury on automatism, in "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town"? We forget quite what his quaint word for it was—"squiggling," anyway something like that. It is what we do on telephone pads with a pencil when we are madly prattling on. Some of us draw funny faces, some triangles and circles, some—but we guess you remember Gary Cooper explaining it, and won't thank us for smudging the memory. The reason we brought it up, though, is to get in our five cents worth about the difference between the paintings of Dali and Miro. Dali is a face-squiggler, Miro is a circle-squiggler; Dali squiggles concrete shapes, Miro abstract. Dali calls his paintings "Snapshots of Reality," and tells us that he wants them to be as though a camera had taken snapshots within his brain. When Dali paints a watch, it is a watch; no camera could give you a more exact

picture of one. In a Dali painting the watch may be melting over the roof of a house, but it is sharply and unmistakably a watch. All the objects in a Dali painting are easily recognizable. It is what they are doing there that gets people down! Dali tells them "... snapshot photographs of subconscious images, surrealist, extravagant, paranoiac hypnagogical, extra-pictorial, phenomenal, super-abundant, super-sensitive, et cetera . . . of concrete irrationality." If that reads like a poster for a medicine show in the 80's to them, they must blame Dali, not us. . . . The Museum of Modern Art is being cagy as to who and what exactly is to be in their show, so we appealed to Mr. Levy to name some of the American surrealists who will probably be included in the Museum's show. Mr. Levy named four. Alexander Calder is sometimes surrealist, he says, sometimes abstractionist. Peter Blume is frequently surrealist in an entirely American idiom. Charles Howard has already had a surrealist show at the Levy Galleries. Finally, there is Joseph Cornell, who is, according to Mr. Levy, one of the few Americans who fully and creatively understand the surrealist viewpoint. Cornell does not paint, he "objectifies." If he dreams of a wooden ball with a long needle sticking through it, that is what he puts together when he wakes. Cornell's little surrealist gadgets might be called imagination-toys for adults. (That's what Mr. Levy calls them, and nobody in America knows more about surrealism than he does.) Incidentally, Caresse Crosby's Black Sun Press is this month bringing out Mr. Levy's book "Surrealism," with heaps of plates. Just the ticket for a nice brooding winter, gentle reader. . . . One sure thing, you aren't going to find a solitary place to hide from surrealism this winter. Department stores have gone demented on the subject for their windows. Dress designers, advertising artists and photographers, short stories in the Saturday Evening Post, everywhere, surrealism. Only—sometimes, and most times, it has no more to do with surrealism than the man in the moon (who maybe has, though). Mr. Levy, who is naturally taut and intense, never has looked more t, and i, than he did when he assured us that Schiaparelli is the *only* designer who understands surrealism. Her dress with the bureau drawer pockets and her vanity case covered with fur are Authentic, so you have the right, and Mr. Levy's blessing, to get nasty with any one who asks you why in heck you bought either of them.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

FROM DADA TO SURREALISM

BY JOHN G. FREY

M. Emile Bouvier describes Dada as "a warlike weapon, the point of which was humor, or if you like, an instrument for the demolition of the Old World by means of a dynamite disguised as a simpleton's jest." Its object



was "to juggle away, to parody, and to ridicule all 'accepted ideas,' all forms of social activity." If one accepts this view of Dadaism, and it is very widespread, then it follows that the Dada work is distinguished by its purely negative character. Its purpose is destructive: it strikes at art with the only weapon Dada could use—humor, the burlesque. It is not intended to be creative: it is intended to cast discredit on creative activity. "The Dada poem is anti-poetry." It is intended solely to create scandal and to insult the bourgeoisie.

But when one acknowledges these qualities as the mark of an authentic Dada work (and they are proclaimed to be such in the Dada manifestos and in the manuals of contemporary history) one finds that the number of



absolute Dada works is extremely limited. In the plastic arts, the classical examples of authentic Dada spirit are the portrait of the Mona Lisa with a moustache painted in, shown at a Dada demonstration, the simple marble urinal with the title *The Fountain*, sent by Marcel Duchamp to the Salon des Independents in New York in 1917, and the photograph of a gollywog which appeared in one of the Dada periodicals with the title *Natures Mortes, Portrait de Cézanne, Portrait de Rembrandt, Portrait de Renoir*.

The paucity of absolute Dada works may be explained by the fact that in the confusion and disorder of the war years, Dada, breaking out simultaneously in a half dozen different countries, lacked the clearly defined character that has since been attributed to it by its historians. Those "very active, not merely dissenting, but, unfortunately, antagonistic dispositions which, between 1915 and 1920, were willing to align themselves under the sign-board of Dada," had in common only that they were all against something. The totality of these private rebellions and animosities broke out in a mob hysteria, the Dada movement, which was against everything.

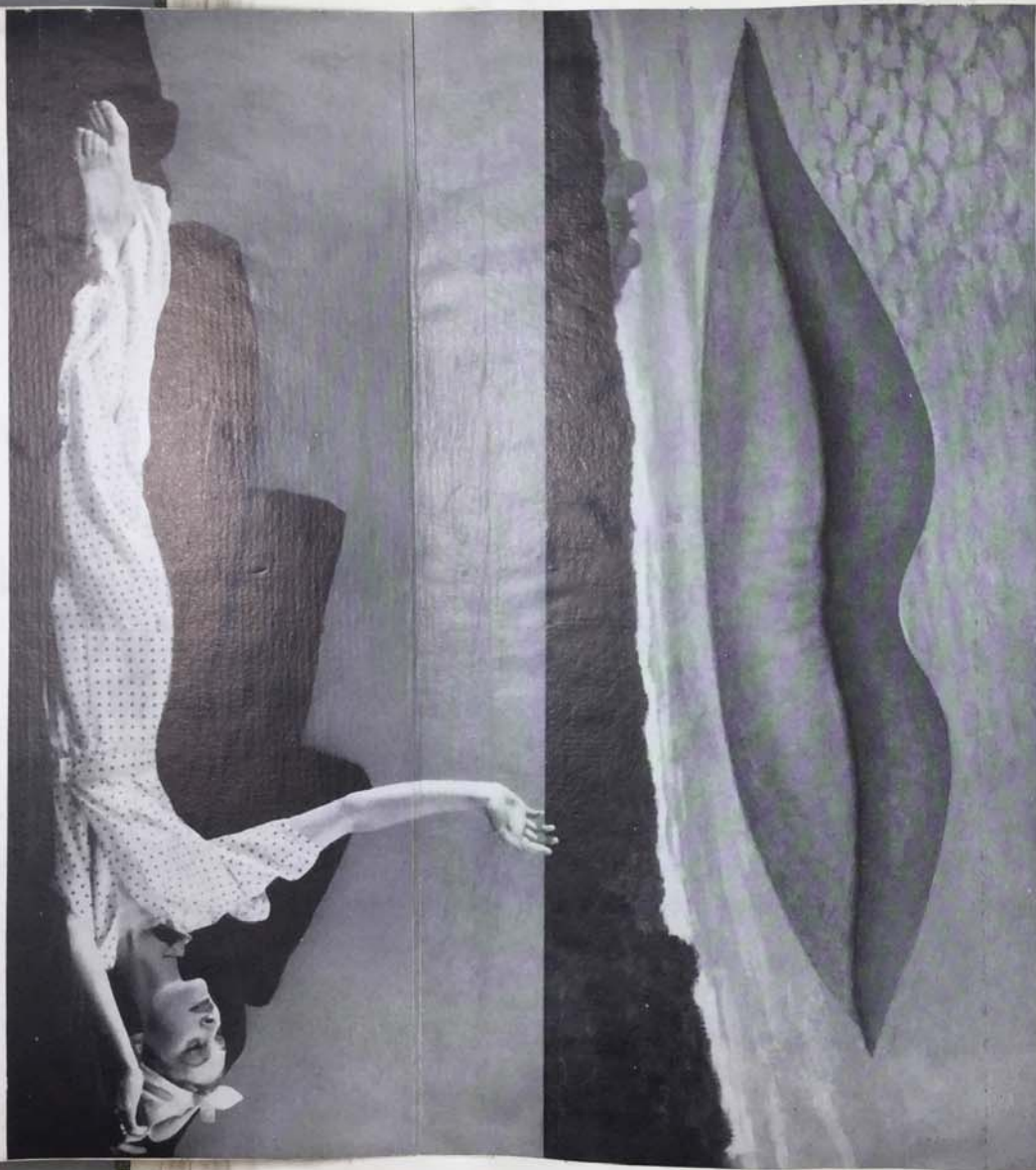
It is obvious that the complete Dadaist is a rare bird, for absolute Dadaism, a complete nihilism, the unconditional rejection of everything, leaves only one recourse—suicide. The only absolute Dadaist that I know of was Jacques Vaché.

In the case of those painters and writers who were to come together to form the Surrealist group, the slogan "Dada is anti-painting, Dada is anti-poetry," signified not a rejection of creative activity, but a rejection of Art as it was practiced by their predecessors, a reaction against all the rules and standards and methods and practices associated with the hated world that has spawned the World War, a reaction against all the literary and artistic attitudes of the past—against realism, against Beauty, against the doctrine of Art for Art's Sake, against the dilettantism of an Anatole France, and so on.

The majority of works exhibited as Dada were negative—Dadaist—only in the sense of being in some way non-conformist. The artists in question were all fumbling for an escape from the impasse created by Dada's complete rejection of everything associated with the past, and the particular solutions they effected showed themselves in the ways in which their careers were later resolved. Kurt Schwitters, Max Ernst, and Hans Arp are eminent exam-

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: ACG	Series.Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------

Against his surrealist painting "Observatory Time—The Lovers," Man Ray photographs a beach coat by Heim of white silk printed with little brown foxes, Hattie Carnegie.



FROM DADA TO SURREALISM

BY JOHN G. FREY

M. Emile Bouvier describes Dada as "a warlike weapon, the point of which was humor, or if you like, an instrument for the demolition of the Old World by means of a dynamite disguised as a simpleton's jest." Its object



was "to juggle away, to parody, and to ridicule all 'accepted ideas,' all forms of social activity." If one accepts this view of Dadaism, and it is very widespread, then it follows that the Dada work is distinguished by its purely negative character. Its purpose is destructive: it strikes at art with the only weapon Dada could use—humor, the burlesque. It is not intended to be creative: it is intended to cast discredit on creative activity. "The Dada poem is anti-poetry." It is intended solely to create scandal and to insult the bourgeoisie.

But when one acknowledges these qualities as the mark of an authentic Dada work (and they are proclaimed to be such in the Dada manifestos and in the manuals of contemporary history) one finds that the number of

absolute Dada works of art, the classical example being the portrait of the Mona Lisa shown at a Dada demonstration with the title *The Fool* the Salon des Independents photograph of a gollywog Dada periodicals with *Cézanne, Portrait de R.* The paucity of absolute Dada is the fact that in the years, Dada, breaking different countries, last that has since been Those "very active, unfortunately, antagonistic and 1920, were willing board of Dada," had against something. The lions and animosities movement, which was It is obvious that the for absolute Dadaism, tional rejection of ever suicide. The only absolute Jacques Vaché.

In the case of those come together to form "Dada is anti-painting, a rejection of creative it was practiced by the all the rules and standards associated with the hated War, a reaction against the doctrine of Art for of an Anatole France,

The majority of world—Dadaist—only in the conformist. The artist for an escape from the rejection of everything particular solutions they ways in which their Schwitters, Max Ernst,

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: ACG	Series.Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	--------------------	----------------------

PARNASSUS

DECEMBER, 1936

ples of the type of quasi-dadist striving to create new values in the shambles and wreckage left by Dada.

Schwitters is Dadaist in his contempt for the traditional *matière* of painting, in his use of junk, buttons, old rags, shoe-horns, and scraps of wire in composing his pictures. But in the strong pictorial organization of his *merzbilder*, in the great care taken in the arrangement of shapes and colors, in his preoccupation with formal values, Schwitters ceases to be Dadaist; indeed, he appears as a reactionary, whose work may be identified with cubism and the *papiers collés* of Picasso. Max Ernst, in his famous *fatagaga* collages is similarly Dadaist in his abandonment of the materials and methods of the painter; with a paste-pot and shears, he assembles his pictures from illustrations cut from medical journals, catalogues, cheap novels, and the like. The pictures of Ernst have as marked a positive character as those of Schwitters, though on a literary rather than on a plastic level. Both Schwitters and Ernst exemplify what may be called (if one keeps in mind the contradiction in terms) "creative Dada." But while Schwitters leaned backwards in time toward the cubists and as a consequence was soon to become *passé*, Ernst's collages, with their hallucinatory unreal beauty, with their startling

What we may call the "iconoclastic period" of Dadaism comes to a close with the *enquête* which appeared in the December, 1919, issue of *Litterature* on the subject "Why do you write?" This ironic question which the Dadaists hurled at their elders summed up the whole negative phase of Dadaism, the phase of violent, destructive reaction against the art of the past. From this point on, the focal point of the Dada movement shifted from a negative to a positive bias.

The central body of Dadaists, after dropping those elements which still clung tenaciously to the standards of the past, began to express their complete disdain for tradition, not by the negative method of aiming attacks and insults at the past, but by changing the concept and function of the arts, by crystallizing certain new techniques and discoveries into a system of new values which successfully expressed their complete non-conformity. To state it in another way, let us say that the negative aspects of Dada, its contempt for reason and logic, its scorn for traditional Art and its rules and values, its hatred of life and the world, were organized into a system which erected as values the opposites of these things,—namely, the illogical and irrational, the spontaneous, the unreal, and so on.

(opposite above)

PETITE FILLE SAUTANT
à la CORDE JOAN MIRO
*In a one man retrospective show at
the Pierre Matisse Gallery*

(opposite below)

PARANOIC FACE
SALVADOR DALI
*(To be looked at sideways also) Lent
by Edward James to the Museum of
Modern Art*

(right)

THE HORDE MAX ERNST
*Lent by Mme. Simone Kohn to the
Museum of Modern Art Exhibition of
Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism*

and mysterious juxtaposition, announced the arrival of Surrealist painting. Like Ernst and Schwitters, Hans Arp shows the Dadaist iconoclasm in the use of materials. His "pictures" are really plaques or bas-reliefs in which he assembles flat pieces of wood cut with a fret saw into fanciful shapes. Free from the discipline and reactionary formalism of Schwitters works, the *bois gravés* of Arp join the collages of Ernst in anticipating the painting of the Surrealists. If we may credit Ernst with discovering those delights of the mysterious, the marvelous, which were later to be so thoroughly exploited by Tanguy and Roy and Dali, then we must also acknowledge Arp for the inspiration he offered in the field of spontaneous plastic creation, the plastic lyricism so wonderfully fulfilled in the paintings of Joan Miro.



The means of organizing this system were provided by the recent discoveries of psychoanalysis, which drew attention to the powerful irrational forces that motivate action, that emerge spontaneously in automatic writing and the ravings of the insane, and that produce rare and mysterious images which are devoid of any resemblance to reality.

The metamorphosis of the Dada movement into what we now know as Surrealism was brought about largely through the initiative of Andre Breton. Under his influence, certain members of the Dada group, as early as 1919, began the systematic practice of automatic writing. Using this method, Breton and Soupault wrote a book entitled *Les Champs Magnétiques*, which stands out as the first authentic surrealist production of our times. The book

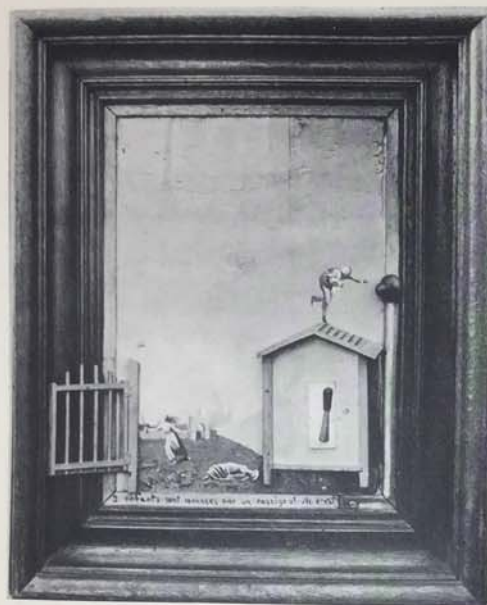
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42



DEUX ENFANTS SONT MENACÉS PAR
UN ROSSIGNOL
MAX ERNST
Lent to the Museum of Modern Art Ex-
hibition by Paul Eluard

The early experiments of Surrealism in the plastic field are represented by paintings reproducing dream images, by collages, and by the Surrealist objects. In the dream pictures (typical examples are found in the works of Yves Tanguy) as in the dream narratives mentioned above, every effort was made to avoid stylization. The painter was to strive as far as possible to render a "tinted photograph" of his inner vision, and, of course, a photo-realistic technique was to be employed. The traditional concepts of talent, of virtuosity, of handling of the *matière* disappear in this scheme of things, but the painter is rewarded by the advances he can make in the domain of the marvelous. Through painting, the surrealist is enabled to make concrete, with a clarity and disorienting power unobtainable by the use of words, a considerable assortment of unusual images of high quality a single one of which he would have been incapable of producing deliberately in the ordinary way.

The development of Surrealism in the pictorial field is typical of the general trend of Surrealism from a passive attitude of enjoyment of dream-states and reveries to an active attitude the typical case of which would be the paranoiac attack on "reality." Surrealism in its later phases was conceived of as an active and irrational intervention into the sphere of "reality," a development which manifested itself on the literary level as a transition from the trances of the "period of sleeping-fits" to Breton's attempts at the simulation of mental diseases in *L'Immaculée Conception*.

In the visual realm, Surrealism tended to greater and greater concreteness, to the actual embodiment of the dream image or irrational image in reality and finally to the action of symbolic dream images in determining or altering the irrational flow of thought. Thus, Surrealism moved from the verbally described dream image to the visual images of surrealist painting, and finally to the surrealist object which is simply a tangible reconstruction of such an image as one meets in dreams. And the surrealist object, emerging from the half light of the dream-world, was in its turn modified to express the visible manifestation of active wishes and desires.

The development of collage is likewise symptomatic of the general trend of Surrealism from a passive to an active nature. The process of creating collages was quite

simple. The artists' attention was first drawn magnetically to one object, and then, without premeditation, to another object, which on contact with the first produced a poetic shock and satisfied the imagination with that quality of the marvelous which the Surrealists admired. And this was also precisely the way in which the Surrealist objects finally came to be created. The original type of Surrealist object (such as proposed by Breton in his *Introduction to a Speech on the Poverty of Reality*) was comparatively simple and innocent: it was the sort of puzzling object frequently met in dreams. But the later Surrealist objects, which functioned symbolically, were not discovered, but, so to speak, created, by an active irrational process of mind. In the course of making collages and experimenting with objects, it was found that certain things which tended to reappear with the constant character of obsessive images (ladies' slippers, watches, birds, pianos, kid gloves, etc.) had an extraordinary value as fetiches, tending to arouse obscure and powerful emotional currents. All that was necessary then for the creation of the collage or Surrealist object was to contemplate the obsessive fetiche until it suggested with the force of inevitability such accessories as would make it the visible image of thoughts and desires. An excellent example of such an object is described by Salvador Dali: "Inside a woman's shoe is placed a glass of warm milk in the center of a soft paste colored to look like excrement. A lump of sugar on which there is a drawing of the shoe has to be dipped in the milk, so that the dissolving of the sugar, and consequently of the image of the shoe, may be watched. Several extras (pubic hairs glued to a lump of sugar, an erotic little photograph, etc.) make up the article which has to be accompanied by a spare box of sugar and a special spoon for stirring leaden pellets inside the shoe."

The practice of collage led to the discovery of several other interesting Surrealist techniques for exploiting the irrational processes of the mind. For example, in poring over the pages of a catalogue containing plates for anatomical or physical demonstration, while searching for materials for collage, it was frequently found that they provided in close conjunction "images so mutually distant that the very absurdity of their collection produced in us a hallucinatory succession of contradictory images. . . . These images themselves brought forth a new plane in order to meet in a new unknown (the plane of non-suitability). Thereupon it was enough either by painting or drawing, a color, a scrawl, a landscape foreign to the objects depicted, the desert, the sky, a geological section, a floor, a straight line expressing the horizon, and a fixed and faithful image was obtained; what previously had been a commonplace page of advertisements became a drama revealing our most secret desires. . . ." (Max Ernst.)

Another fruitful domain of research was opened when it was discovered that certain ambiguous shapes such as appear in manuals of medicine or handbooks of decorative art revealed a propensity to adopt, on concentrated study, a variety of shapes determined by the secret desires and wishes and obsessions of the investigator. The materialization of images in an object capable of suggesting a variety of shapes, of yielding itself to several interpretations, is shown in still another Surrealist technique, *frottage*, which was employed with remarkable effect by Max Ernst. *Frottages*, as the name implies, are obtained by rubbing charcoal or pigment on a paper which has been placed over some rough surface that is the object of study. "The drawings thus obtained steadily lose, thanks to a series of suggestions and transmutations occurring to one spontaneously—similarly to what takes place in the production of hypnagogical visions—the character of the material

being studied—wood—and assume the aspect of unbelievably clear images of a nature probably able to reveal the first cause of the obsession or to produce a simulacrum thereof." (Ernst.)

It should be noticed that all of the techniques just discussed call for a deliberate disorientation of the mind, in which the imagination is consciously set in a definite direction and a particular kind of irrational flow of images is induced. In general, this active attitude, which contrasts sharply with the passive receptivity of the early phases of surrealism, is the outstanding characteristic of the most recent trend of the movement. This tendency, which represents Surrealism's closest approach to its goal of fusion of real and unreal, was systematized and given its broadest scope in Breton's "simulations"; and in the field of painting it has been widely applied by Salvador Dali. In the *Immaculée Conception*, Breton and Eluard attempted with remarkable success to simulate the major deliriums in their character as modes of inspiration and expression. They demonstrated conclusively the possibility of adopting the point of view of a disordered mind in interpreting the phenomena of experience. "Loin de sacrifier par goût au Pittoresque en adoptant tour à tour, de confiance, les divers langages tenus, à tort ou à raison, pour les plus inadéquats à leur objet, non contents d'en attendre même un réel effet de curiosité, les auteurs espèrent, d'une part, prouver que l'esprit dressé poétiquement chez l'homme normal, est capable de reproduire dans ses grands traits les manifestations verbales les plus paradoxales, les plus excentriques, qu'il est au pouvoir de cet esprit de se soumettre à volonté les principales idées délicates sans qu'il y aille pour lui d'un trouble durable, sans que cela soit susceptible de compromettre en rien sa faculté d'équilibre." (*L'Immaculée Conception*.)

The importance of this achievement in its bearing on Surrealist painting has been fully demonstrated by Salvador Dali. The various methods of painting used by Dali exemplify the displacement of intelligence by a cunning and violent paranoiac attitude carefully simulated, so that we may call his various methods of painting paranoiac criticisms, or paranoiac interpretations, of slightly different varieties. For example, Dali makes constant use of the multiple image, which he considers typical of paranoia, cleverly designing his pictures so that the same object may at one and the same time suggest a variety of different things. Or he will start by drawing an image in the center of his canvas and then paint around this focal image whatever other images are suggested to him by the paranoiac course of his imagination. Or, starting from some myth, or legend or event, or person with which he is familiar, he will give free rein to his imagination, letting it run wild in a simulated paranoiac interpretation of the theme. An example of this would be his use as starting points or focal themes for his paintings of such things as the legend of William Tell, or the figures of Millet's *Angulus*, or the image of his wife Gala. Thus the figures of Millet's *Angulus* become altered so that (to draw an example from Dali) "the woman is made flesh in the person of Sacher-Masoch; her eyes look into mine with infinite sadness; she is dressed in furs and wears an immense lambchop on her head . . . etc., etc."

With the amazing activities of Salvador Dali, both in painting and in life, the Romantic movement of which both Surrealism and Dada are a part, reaches its extreme limit. It is hardly likely that Surrealist painting can be pushed beyond the point it has now reached.

Painting has been abolished, the painter has been abolished, there is left only the semi-madman, the voluntary lunatic driving on in desperate battle with reality.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

PARNASSUS, Vol. VIII, No. 7, December, 1936

CURRENT
EXHIBITIONSReviewed by
MARGARET BREUNING

I have always felt a secret sympathy with the Athenian who blackballed Aristides solely because he was tired of hearing him called "just." Too constant adulation of any virtue often has the effect of making us rebel against it and, also, against its reputed possessor. So it seems to me that we would be in a far better position to appreciate the work of John Marin, which is now being shown at the Museum of Modern Art, if it had not been subject to such persistent ballyhoo for many years that it has produced in many persons an attempt at defensive coloration, as it were, a desire to run counter to this stream of laudatory exaggeration, to escape the absurd rumors of fantastic prices and sacrosanct performance. Although there are etchings and paintings included in the museum exhibition, it is, of course, on the watercolors that Marin's much heralded reputation rests. The difficult feat of hanging so many papers effectively has been ably accomplished, yet it seems to me that a careful selection resulting in fewer items would have produced a far more impressive exhibition. The variations between these papers is so subtle and slight in different statements of a theme, that this large collection brings a sense of repetition and monotony, which is never felt in viewing smaller groupings of Marin's pictures. Marin succeeds remarkably in making over the world in terms of his own intense, ecstatic vision with reliance on the most subtle organization; a tenuous wash, an apparently

negligible line are really armatures of the unified impression that he succeeds in gaining. I suppose that to so sensitive a vision as that of this artist, the world presents quite a different aspect than it does to our blunter perceptions, so that the distortions and exaggerations of familiar forms serve to convey the exact essence of the thing he depicts as no literal description could do—the roll of a wave, the set of sails in a stiff breeze, the rush of a boat through water, the tremendous jut of a hillside against a luscious sky. The papers of lower Manhattan, for example, give exactly the quality of the absurd agglomeration of towering buildings each striving to overtop the other which constitutes this region. The towers rush up madly and sway, they seem to feel the tempo of modern life in their fantastic orgy of planes and stabs of direction. Such work is the very quintessence of realism since it centers on the essential and strikes it out in vivid terms and in color that seem to echo the emotional key. It seems to me, however, that the statement of these papers lacks completeness more often than it achieves it. It is not that an artist may not leave much to the intelligence of the beholder, but that this same beholder should feel that the idea was complete in the artist's mind and did not depend on any accidental felicities that work in watercolor often produces. Undoubtedly the idea is always there, but it has not been developed with enough clarity to make it apparent. It is for this

reason that for all the lyrical intensity of Marin's work, its enticements of color and delight of fresh, unexpected presentment of familiar themes, there is often—more often than not—a disappointment in the lack of fulness of statement; the impression that the thing does not quite come off on the artist's own terms.

THE CARNEGIE MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 1936

MODERN ART IN
NEW YORK[From *The Literary Digest*]

THE Marx Brothers of the art world are displayed, in all their unrestrained glory, in an exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism at the Museum of Modern Art in New York this week.

Many visitors, to whom Surrealism is just another ism, and Dada has always been the first word bumbled by an infant, were bewildered enough by the 700-odd paintings and objects that abound throughout the Museum's four floors.

But they felt their last grip on sanity slipping when they discovered two old friends and stand-bys included with the zanies of brush and canvas—Walt Disney, "Mickey Mouse's" mentor, and Rube Goldberg creator of the incredible comic-strip scientist, "Prof. Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, A. K."

Other eye-popping items: A fur-lined and covered teacup, saucer and spoon, lent by the artist, Meret Oppenheim.

Man Ray's (French photographer and painter) nine-foot-wide, two-foot-high canvas of a well-rouged mouth floating in a cloudy sky. The same artist's painting "Eye," a human sight organ in which the iris is a mass of clouds and blue sky, caused as much disturbance.

An exhibition of this type is always easy prey for the practical joker. A similar show in Paris several years ago exhibited a shovel, submitted by a well-known but discontented artist as an example of perfect symmetry.

The Museum of Modern Art runs less chance of being duped. The Director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., an authority on the schools of art that are akin to Gertrude Stein's writing, selected only accredited objects with a knowledge that forestalled pranksters.

[Mr. Barr has defined "modern" painting as a combination of the savage, the infant, and the lunatic. No one could improve upon that.]

The Fantastics

WE went up to the Museum of Modern Art last week to catch a preglimpse of the Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism that is on there now and will last through January 17th. Workmen, directors, and a stray artist or two were deep in confusion and dream, arranging the various items on the walls of the museum's four floors. A lady with Titian hair and pale-green eyes, a Miss Sarah Neumeyer, in charge of publicity, took us in hand. She showed us a conglomeration of a garbage-can cover, some used Carnation milk cans, a pair of old rubbers, dirty feathers, a rolling pin with a glass insulator stuck on one end, a sieve, and a big horsewhip. They had to watch the workmen to see they didn't throw this exhibit out. It is entitled "Agog" and was assembled by one Wallace Putnam. "Where does he live?" was all we could think of to say. "On Eighth Street," said Miss Neumeyer. Then she took us to the second floor, where we were shown some of the works of Salvador Dali and some of the works of Max Ernst. We said they were alike, but that was wrong. "Dali," said our guide, "is influenced by hypnagogic concepts and paranoiac images, whereas Ernst usually has his tongue in his cheek." That is the difference.

We met an artist on the second floor, a gentleman in a lavender shirt and a mustard sweater (the colors, not the plants). It came out that he was Mr. Alexander Calder, a mobilist and not a surrealist. "He hasn't played ball with the surrealists for years," Miss Neumeyer whispered. Mobilists deal in mobiles, which are constructions that are supposed to move. Sometimes they make sounds. Mr. Calder showed us a mobile consisting of various colored balls suspended on strings. He gave it a little push and the balls began to rotate gently. "The balls are suspended in space, so you must, plastically, ignore the strings," he told us. We wanted to ask why one could plastically ignore the fact that the balls, when motionless, were not moving, but let it go. Mr. Calder is thirty-eight, attended Stevens Tech in Hoboken, and was once a timekeeper in a mining camp out West. He drifted into mobiles. Once you're in, you become fascinated, like a brooding husband with a pigs-

in-clover puzzle. Mr. Calder has an apartment in the East Eighties, a wife who plays the accordion, a baby girl, a cat, a dog, and a giggle.

We also met Leonor Fini, an Argentine girl, who was watching two sheepish workmen hanging one of her canvases which represents two girls in mauve dresses and strange postures. Miss Neumeyer told us that when Miss Fini arrived here from Paris two weeks ago, her hair was violet, but that she had washed it out. We said something to Miss Fini. "Spik Spanish, spik Franch, spik Italian, spik Gairmahn, no spik Ohnglish," she told us. In Franch, which we spik none too well, we gouged out the news that La Fini's painting is called "Game of Legs in the Key of Dreams." "It is intended to suggest the childishness which is latent in all adults," said Miss Neumeyer. "Bien," we said. We found ourself now face to face with Man Ray, the famous photographer, who also does surrealist paintings. He stood before an enormous painting of an enormous pair of lips, entitled "Standard Observatory Time—The Lovers." We heard ourself daringly asking Mr. Ray what it meant. "Ordinarily, when somebody asks me to explain a painting, I ask him to explain a tree—and he's always stumped," began Mr. Ray. We can explain a tree, but said nothing. "This painting," explained the artist, "is half a dream and half a sort of conscious representation of the whole idea of love. However, if you wish to give it any other interpretation, you are welcome to." We bowed. Mr. Ray was born in Philadelphia. You are not supposed to shake his painting, of course, or "Lop Lop Introduces a Young Girl," a canvas by Max Ernst, or hundreds of others. They are immobles. There are seven hundred objects in all at the show. We wouldn't, if we were you, shake any of them.

DECEMBER 12, 1936

THE NEW YORKER

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

A R T

Marvelous & Fantastic

(See front cover)

Inside the front door of Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art this week, oblong slabs of glass painted with black stripes revolved steadily under a six foot pair of red lips painted by Artist Man Ray. In other galleries throughout the building were a black felt head with a necklace of cinema film and zippers for eyes; a stuffed parrot on a hollow log containing a doll's leg; a teacup, plate and spoon covered entirely with fur; a picture painted on the back of a door from which dangled a dollar watch, a plaster crab and a huge board to which were tacked a mousetrap, a pair of baby shoes, a rubber sponge, clothespins, a stiff collar, pearl necklace, a child's umbrella, a braid of auburn hair and a number of hairpins twisted to form a human face. There were in addition, books, prints and paintings ranging from the 15th to the 20th Century, from Pieter Bruegel to contemporary Peter Blume. Having done its best to explain abstract art to the U. S. public last spring (TIME, March 9), the Museum of Modern Art was now attempting to explain another exotic movement with an equally important show broadly titled *Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism*, or *Art of the Marvelous and Fantastic*.

Fantastic Art has always existed, always will as long as men have illogical minds and unruly imaginations. The Museum's walls historically carried fantastic art from the horror pictures of medieval Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel, through the engravings of Hogarth, to the comic cartoons of Rube Goldberg and the frustrated drawings of James Thurber. Prominently displayed as examples of fantastic art were copies of Edward Lear's *Nonsense Rhymes*, Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky*. This week's exhibition did not disdain the art of the frankly insane. There was a panel of wild designs by a crazed French banknote engraver, a drawing of something like a perverted rooster from the inspired brush of an ecstatic Czech (see p. 61).

Dada is something newer, different, a bewilderment that affected the art world of Europe for a few shell-shocked years during and immediately after the War. The object of dadaism was a conscious attack on reason, a complete negation of everything, the loudest and silliest expression of post-War cynicism. "I affirm," wrote early Dadaist Hans Arp, "that Tristan Tzara discovered the word dada on the 8th of February, 1916, at 6 o'clock in the evening . . . in the Terrace Café in Zurich. I was there with my twelve children when Tzara pronounced for the first time this word, which aroused a legitimate enthusiasm in all of us." (Later Dadaist Richard Huelsenbeck claimed: " . . . it was I who pronounced the word dada [hobby-horse] for the first time.") In moments of harmony and logic which they affected to despise, dadaists admitted that their object was "to spit in the eye of the world."

A leader of the dadaists, later to be one of the most important surrealists, was a young German painter named Max Ernst. Cologne still remembers the dada exhibition organized by Max Ernst and Hans Arp in 1920. The entrance to the exhibition was through a public lavatory. Gallery-goers were given hatchets to smash any pictures they did not approve and a young girl in a white communion



Museum of Modern Art

ARTIST ERNST

. . . wanted to spit in the world's eye.

dress stood on a platform reciting obscene poems.

The same year Paris dadaists gave a "Festival" in the respectable Salle Gaveau Concert Hall. The program bore the announcement: "Personal Appearance of Charlie Chaplin. The dadaists will pull their hair out in public." Neither event occurred, nor did such promised attractions as the first performance of *Symphonic Vaseline* by Tristan Tzara to be played by an orchestra of 20. Instead, young conservatives in the pit turned dadaists themselves, hurled tomatoes and hunks of raw meat (procured from a nearby butcher shop) at the stage while the dadaists volleyed back the missiles with delighted gusto. The owner of the building, Mme Gaveau, shouted furious protests from her box.

The black felt head with the zipper eyes, the stuffed parrot on the hollow log that appeared at the Modern Museum are typical dadaist artifacts, incorrigibly senseless but regarded by their owners as good examples of a movement that still has vivid memories.

Surrealism. An art movement without hope or object cannot last long. Dadaist Max Ernst in his desire to spit in the eye of the world was experimenting about this time with what he calls his *collages*: fantastic pictures made by cutting apart old engravings and rearranging them to make bustling ladies with lions' heads, assassins with angels' wings, strange trees growing from horses' backs, etc. Examining these and other dadaist creations, Poet André

Breton, who frequently dresses entirely in green, smokes a green pipe, drinks a green liqueur and has a sound knowledge of Freudian psychology, discovered behind all this a newer and betterism. In the autumn of 1924 he wrote his *Manifesto of Surrealism*, and a word and a school were born.* Excerpt:

"Surrealism rests in the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association neglected heretofore; in the omnipotence of the dream and in the disinterested play of thought. . . . We who have not given ourselves to processes of filtering, who through the medium of our work have been content to be the silent receptacle of many echoes . . . are perhaps yet serving a much nobler cause."

Surrealism in plainer language is an attempt to explore the subconscious mind and to evoke emotional reactions through the illogical juxtaposition of objects. The difference between the cubists and present day abstract painters on one hand, and dadaists and surrealists on the other is basic, easily grasped. Abstract painters think of their pictures and statues as objects devoid of meaning, sufficient unto themselves. Surrealist art is still based on reproduction, one reason that its ablest exponents cling to the finicky technique of Victorian miniature painters.

Not all surrealists are serious. Some strive diligently to apply the Breton esthetic, while others are merely frivolous dabblers and assemblers of miscellaneous junk. Nevertheless, one thing almost all surrealists have in common is an instinct for dramatic titles. Thumbing through the catalog last week gallery goers lifted eyebrows at the following items:

Melancholy and Mystery of a Street (de Chirico).

The King and Queen Traversed by Swift Nudes (Marcel Duchamp).

Bewitched in the Zoo (Paul Klee).

Leaves and Novels (Hans Arp).

The Little Tear Gland that Says Tie Tie (Max Ernst).

Object which does not Praise Times Past (Francis Picabia).

Students of surrealism rank with Founder Breton and converted Dadaist Max Ernst, several practitioners of equal or greater importance. There is the able Italian Giorgio de Chirico, who, besides his familiar studies of prancing horses and Roman columns, likes to paint surrealist views of long deserted streets in dream cities, adding to one work a startling note by carefully painting realistic tea biscuits on the end of a painted crate. There is Philadelphia-born Man Ray, who is not only an able painter but manages to imbue Rayograph pictures of bits of wire, corks and lumps of sugar with exactly the eerie quality that surrealists desire. Least concerned with sexual symbolism and one of the most commercially successful of surrealists is genteel, dapper Pierre Roy, whose gay arrangements of bright ribbons, bits of seashells, sticks and empty wine glasses have long charmed socialites, advertising art directors and smartchart editors. But surrealism would never have attracted its present attention in the U. S. were it not for a handsome 32-year-old

*The word *surrealist* was first used in 1917 when late Poet Guillaume Apollinaire subtitled his play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, *Drame Surrealiste*.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	
	Series/Folder:	42

DECEMBER 12, 1936 ✦ SURREALISM
FROM 1450 TO DADA AND DALI
THE MORGAN ITALIAN FESTIVAL

PRICE
25
CENTS

THE ART NEWS



Marvelous & Fantastic

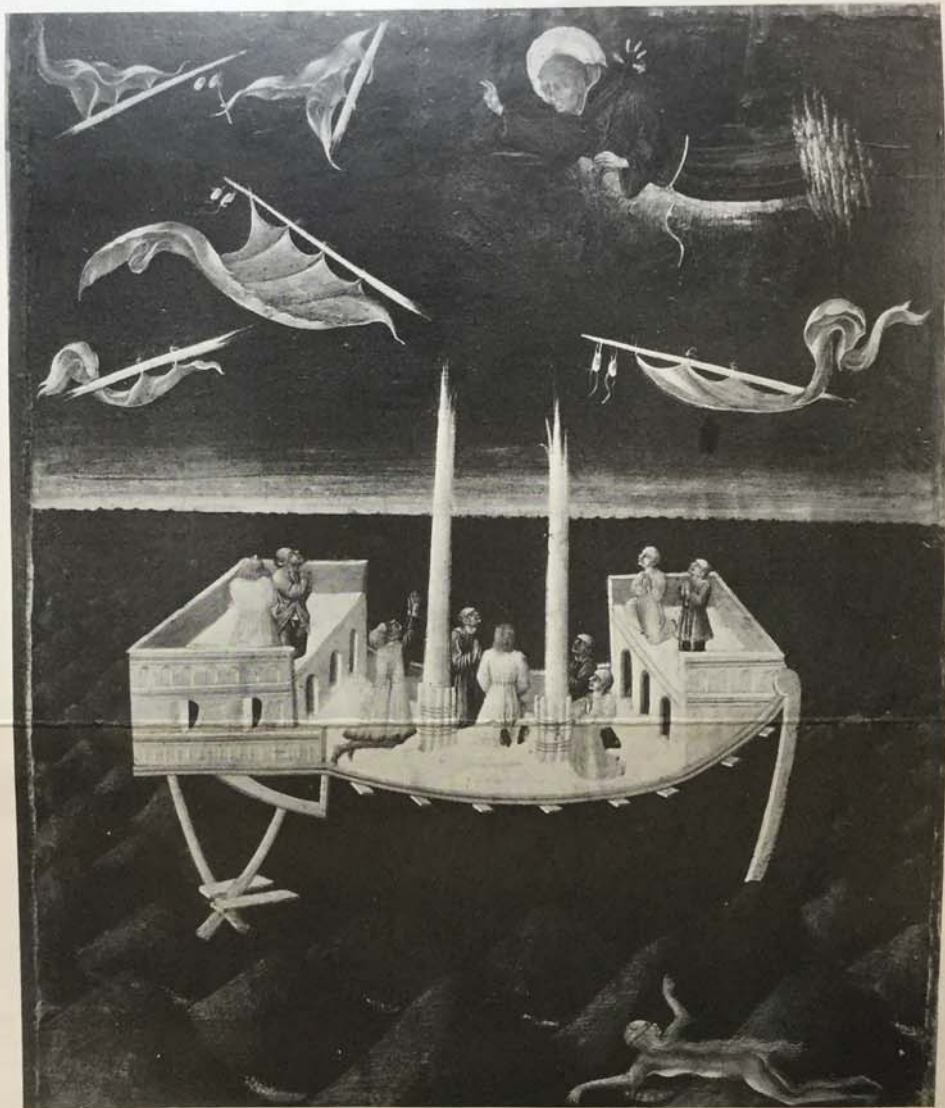
(see front cover)

Inside the front door of the Museum of Modern Art this week, a black and white photograph of red lips painted by Artist A. in other galleries throughout the museum. A black felt head with a stuffed parrot on a hollow log, a doll's leg; a teacup, plate covered entirely with fur; a dangled dollar watch, a painted and a huge board to which were mousetrap, a pair of baby shoes, a necklace, a child's umbrella, hair and a number twisted to form a human face. In addition, books, prints and paintings ranging from the 15th to the 19th century from Pieter Bruegel the Elder to the 19th century. Having nearly Peter Blume. The last spring (Time, M. of Modern Art was not to explain another exotic exhibition, especially important since the 1950s, the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, the 1990s, the 2000s, the 2010s, the 2020s, the 2030s, the 2040s, the 2050s, the 2060s, the 2070s, the 2080s, the 2090s, the 2100s, the 2110s, the 2120s, the 2130s, the 2140s, the 2150s, the 2160s, the 2170s, the 2180s, the 2190s, the 2200s, the 2210s, the 2220s, the 2230s, the 2240s, the 2250s, the 2260s, the 2270s, the 2280s, the 2290s, the 2300s, the 2310s, the 2320s, the 2330s, the 2340s, the 2350s, the 2360s, the 2370s, the 2380s, the 2390s, the 2400s, the 2410s, the 2420s, the 2430s, the 2440s, the 2450s, the 2460s, the 2470s, the 2480s, the 2490s, the 2500s, the 2510s, the 2520s, the 2530s, the 2540s, the 2550s, the 2560s, the 2570s, the 2580s, the 2590s, the 2600s, the 2610s, the 2620s, the 2630s, the 2640s, the 2650s, the 2660s, the 2670s, the 2680s, the 2690s, the 2700s, the 2710s, the 2720s, the 2730s, the 2740s, the 2750s, the 2760s, the 2770s, the 2780s, the 2790s, the 2800s, the 2810s, the 2820s, the 2830s, the 2840s, the 2850s, the 2860s, the 2870s, the 2880s, the 2890s, the 2900s, the 2910s, the 2920s, the 2930s, the 2940s, the 2950s, the 2960s, the 2970s, the 2980s, the 2990s, the 3000s, the 3010s, the 3020s, the 3030s, the 3040s, the 3050s, the 3060s, the 3070s, the 3080s, the 3090s, the 3100s, the 3110s, the 3120s, the 3130s, the 3140s, the 3150s, the 3160s, the 3170s, the 3180s, the 3190s, the 3200s, the 3210s, the 3220s, the 3230s, the 3240s, the 3250s, the 3260s, the 3270s, the 3280s, the 3290s, the 3300s, the 3310s, the 3320s, the 3330s, the 3340s, the 3350s, the 3360s, the 3370s, the 3380s, the 3390s, the 3400s, the 3410s, the 3420s, the 3430s, the 3440s, the 3450s, the 3460s, the 3470s, the 3480s, the 3490s, the 3500s, the 3510s, the 3520s, the 3530s, the 3540s, the 3550s, the 3560s, the 3570s, the 3580s, the 3590s, the 3600s, the 3610s, the 3620s, the 3630s, the 3640s, the 3650s, the 3660s, the 3670s, the 3680s, the 3690s, the 3700s, the 3710s, the 3720s, the 3730s, the 3740s, the 3750s, the 3760s, the 3770s, the 3780s, the 3790s, the 3800s, the 3810s, the 3820s, the 3830s, the 3840s, the 3850s, the 3860s, the 3870s, the 3880s, the 3890s, the 3900s, the 3910s, the 3920s, the 3930s, the 3940s, the 3950s, the 3960s, the 3970s, the 3980s, the 3990s, the 4000s, the 4010s, the 4020s, the 4030s, the 4040s, the 4050s, the 4060s, the 4070s, the 4080s, the 4090s, the 4100s, the 4110s, the 4120s, the 4130s, the 4140s, the 4150s, the 4160s, the 4170s, the 4180s, the 4190s, the 4200s, the 4210s, the 4220s, the 4230s, the 4240s, the 4250s, the 4260s, the 4270s, the 4280s, the 4290s, the 4300s, the 4310s, the 4320s, the 4330s, the 4340s, the 4350s, the 4360s, the 4370s, the 4380s, the 4390s, the 4400s, the 4410s, the 4420s, the 4430s, the 4440s, the 4450s, the 4460s, the 4470s, the 4480s, the 4490s, the 4500s, the 4510s, the 4520s, the 4530s, the 4540s, the 4550s, the 4560s, the 4570s, the 4580s, the 4590s, the 4600s, the 4610s, the 4620s, the 4630s, the 4640s, the 4650s, the 4660s, the 4670s, the 4680s, the 4690s, the 4700s, the 4710s, the 4720s, the 4730s, the 4740s, the 4750s, the 4760s, the 4770s, the 4780s, the 4790s, the 4800s, the 4810s, the 4820s, the 4830s, the 4840s, the 4850s, the 4860s, the 4870s, the 4880s, the 4890s, the 4900s, the 4910s, the 4920s, the 4930s, the 4940s, the 4950s, the 4960s, the 4970s, the 4980s, the 4990s, the 5000s, the 5010s, the 5020s, the 5030s, the 5040s, the 5050s, the 5060s, the 5070s, the 5080s, the 5090s, the 5100s, the 5110s, the 5120s, the 5130s, the 5140s, the 5150s, the 5160s, the 5170s, the 5180s, the 5190s, the 5200s, the 5210s, the 5220s, the 5230s, the 5240s, the 5250s, the 5260s, the 5270s, the 5280s, the 5290s, the 5300s, the 5310s, the 5320s, the 5330s, the 5340s, the 5350s, the 5360s, the 5370s, the 5380s, the 5390s, the 5400s, the 5410s, the 5420s, the 5430s, the 5440s, the 5450s, the 5460s, the 5470s, the 5480s, the 5490s, the 5500s, the 5510s, the 5520s, the 5530s, the 5540s, the 5550s, the 5560s, the 5570s, the 5580s, the 5590s, the 5600s, the 5610s, the 5620s, the 5630s, the 5640s, the 5650s, the 5660s, the 5670s, the 5680s, the 5690s, the 5700s, the 5710s, the 5720s, the 5730s, the 5740s, the 5750s, the 5760s, the 5770s, the 5780s, the 5790s, the 5800s, the 5810s, the 5820s, the 5830s, the 5840s, the 5850s, the 5860s, the 5870s, the 5880s, the 5890s, the 5900s, the 5910s, the 5920s, the 5930s, the 5940s, the 5950s, the 5960s, the 5970s, the 5980s, the 5990s, the 6000s, the 6010s, the 6020s, the 6030s, the 6040s, the 6050s, the 6060s, the 6070s, the 6080s, the 6090s, the 6100s, the 6110s, the 6120s, the 6130s, the 6140s, the 6150s, the 6160s, the 6170s, the 6180s, the 6190s, the 6200s, the 6210s, the 6220s, the 6230s, the 6240s, the 6250s, the 6260s, the 6270s, the 6280s, the 6290s, the 6300s, the 6310s, the 6320s, the 6330s, the 6340s, the 6350s, the 6360s, the 6370s, the 6380s, the 6390s, the 6400s, the 6410s, the 6420s, the 6430s, the 6440s, the 6450s, the 6460s, the 6470s, the 6480s, the 6490s, the 6500s, the 6510s, the 6520s, the 6530s, the 6540s, the 6550s, the 6560s, the 6570s, the 6580s, the 6590s, the 6600s, the 6610s, the 6620s, the 6630s, the 6640s, the 6650s, the 6660s, the 6670s, the 6680s, the 6690s, the 6700s, the 6710s, the 6720s, the 6730s, the 6740s, the 6750s, the 6760s, the 6770s, the 6780s, the 6790s, the 6800s, the 6810s, the 6820s, the 6830s, the 6840s,

Fantastic Art has always been a way of life for many artists, and as long as men have dreamed of worlds and untidy imaginations, they have walked the streets of the museum's walls historically carrying their own private worlds with them. From the horror pictures of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel the Elder to the engravings of James Ensor and the comic cartoons of Rubé Gouddi, the frustrated drawings of Janine Antoni, and the "fantastic art" of Edvard Munch's *Tomtehus Rhymes*, Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, and the *Wunderkammer*. This week's exhibition is a panel of wild designs by French banknote engraver, a something like a perverted rococo, and a brush of a ecst

Dada is something newer, something that affected the development of a few shell-shocked Europeans, who were touring and immediately after the war the object of dadaism was an attack on reason, complete with everything, the loudest and the expression of post-war chaos. It was early Dadaism. This is what Tzara discovered in the 8th of February 1916, in the evening . . . in the Theater Zurich. . . . There were children when Tzara pronounced this time this word, which was a tremendous enthusiasm in all of us. I was Richard Huelsenbeck, I was Tristan Tzara, I was Francis Picabia. I had pronounced the word "dada" [hoity-ho] for the first time in many of harmony and I was affected to despise, dadaism was that their object was "to spit the world".

THE ART NEWS



LENT TO THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART BY THE TRUSTEE OF THE JOHNSON COLLECTION, PHILADELPHIA

SURREALISM IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY SIENA

Giovanni di Paolo's 'Miracle of St. Nicholas of Bari', circa 1450, depicting the appearance of the saint in response to the prayers of distressed sailors on a vessel threatened by the evil forces of nature in the form of a siren, devastating waves and winds. It is included in the exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism as one of the early European paintings embodying a fantastic and marvellous character presumably parallel to contemporary Dada-Surrealist paintings which are, however, directed by the more personal symbolism of the subconscious.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: A69	Series Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	-----------------	-------------------

and other dadaist creations, Poet André Breton, who frequently dresses entirely in

Breton, who frequently dresses entirely in

Series Folder: 42	Collection: ACG	The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY
----------------------	--------------------	---------------------------------------



THE ART NEWS

DECEMBER 12, 1936

Surrealism from 1450 to Dada & Dali

By Martha Davidson

THE Museum of Modern Art opens its doors to a public that is bound to be amused or outraged at the maelstrom which, in appalling abundance is presented for their inspection with careful indices but with little explanation of the curious inclusions in an exhibition that is called *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*. The visitor should be warned beforehand against the temptation of shutting the gate of one picture, or of pulling a watch case which houses a trout fly and which dangles from a breast of another. But, above all, he must be forewarned of the dangers of Duchamp's rotating machinery which, beneath Man Ray's lips in the sky, greets the visitor. For, according to Hugnet, it at one time threatened Man Ray with decapitation, and that is a serious award for curious contemplation.

But it is too easy to scoff, too difficult to understand or to analyze, with smug reliance on the primacy of tradition. Alfred Barr, as Director of the Museum, in an "objective and historical manner" asserts that in offering "material for the study of one of the important and conspicuous movements of modern art . . . the Museum does not intend to set its stamp of approval upon a particular aspect of modern art." But such objectivity does not deter him from mentioning, "that Surrealism as an art movement is a serious affair and that for many it is more than an art movement; it is a philosophy, a way of life, a cause to which some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age are giving themselves with consuming devotion."

There is perhaps a slight overstatement in the explanation. "The grouping of the illustrations in the book clarifies its intention and tells its story." In a passing mention of "certain obvious resemblances between some of the

works in the historical division and certain Dada and Surrealist works" a confusing element is revealed in the statement, "These resemblances, however startling, may prove to be superficial or merely technical in character rather than psychological. The study of the art in the past in the light of Surrealist esthetic is only just beginning. Genuine analogies may exist but they must be kept tentative until our knowledge of the states of mind of, say, Bosch or Bracelli has been increased by systematic research and comparison. One may suppose, however, that many of the fantastic and apparently Surrealist works of the Baroque and Renaissance (not to mention contemporary productions also included in the show) are to be explained on *rational* grounds rather than on a *Surrealist* basis of subconscious and irrational expression." Thus, within a one-page preface, is the key to the exhibition offered to the public.

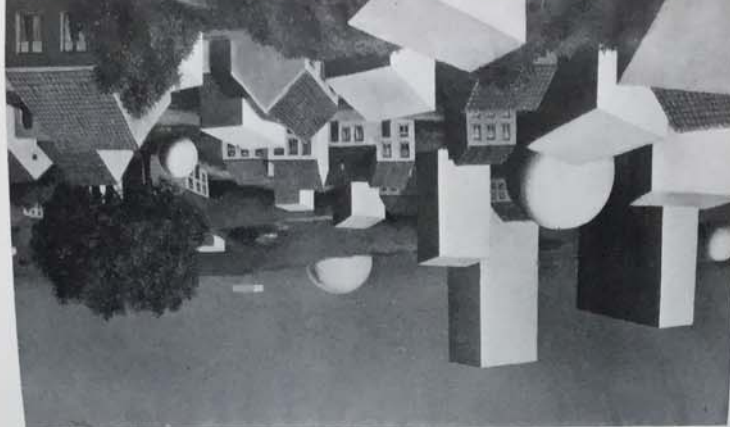
It is well first to be forearmed with a clear understanding of the basic principles which underlie two post-war manifestations in the plastic arts: Dada and Surrealism. Dada, whose beginnings may be traced back to 1910, took crystallized shape in Zurich in 1916, during the war. It was a protest of a disillusioned generation against the destructive machinations of an ordered society. It met destruction with destruction. Order gave way to iconoclastic disorder; the negative character of accidental construction became the artistic goal in a curiously contradictory attempt to destroy the artistic ideal by means of a "systematic demoralization." Beauty was denied as well as creative individuality. Spontaneity and surprise, based frequently on deliberate ugliness were exalted above plastic qualities which they also denied.

This artistic revolution involved material as well as sub-



EXHIBITED AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
EARLY SURREALISM, DE CHIRICO'S "MELANCHOLY AND MYSTERY OF THE STREET"

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: A64	Series/Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	-----------------	-------------------



13

12

ject matter and technique. The *collage*, a development of Picasso's *papiers collés*, gave the Dadaists an opportunity to collect disconnected objects and combine them in startling representations. Hausmann's *Head* (1919) is composed of random pieces of newspaper pasted together in the suggestive shape of a head while Höch's *Collage* (1920) is a more complicated assemblage of pasted items. Animated objects by Ernst, with such anti-aesthetic titles as *1 copper plate 1 lead plate 1 rubber towel 2 key rings 1 drain pipe 1 tubular man* illustrate the "mechano-morphic" character of Dada so comparable in appearance to the seventeenth century etchings of Giovanni Bracelli. "Rayographs" by Man Ray and ready-made objects by Duchamp illustrate Dada's elevation of the accidental and of the commonplace as substitutes for works of art. *Collages* by Arp, which assume their color and shape by random cutting, also exalt the chance object. Coöperative effort by Ernst and Arp produced the *Fatagaga* (*fabrication de tableaux garantis gazométriques*), a series of *collages*. If Picabia's mechanical charts and Schwitters' *collage*, *Radiating World*, repulse the visitor they have achieved precisely what they set out to do. It was Schwitters who formulated Dada's aesthetic disgust in the terse remark, "all an artist spits is art." Such was the hysterical reaction to and escape



LENT BY MR. PHILIP HOFER

"THEY HAVE ALREADY RETAINED THEIR SEATS" BY GOYA

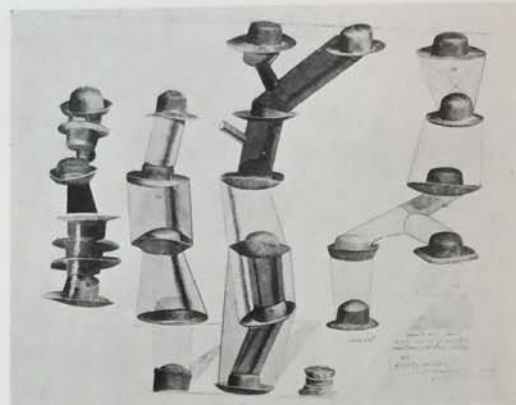
from the blood that was being spat by all the laws of society's logic. While Dada, which rapidly began to die in 1920, based its revolution on negation and on the destruction of reason Surrealism under the direction of André Breton founded its movement in 1924 on the more positive basis of recreating a visual world governed by the illogical subconscious. In the first manifesto of Surrealism Breton marks its foundation: the union of two apparently contradictory states, dream and reality, into an *absolute reality* or *sur-reality*. Later he adds, "*nous voyons dans une telle contradiction la cause même du malheur de l'homme mais nous y voyons aussi la source de son mouvement*." The benefit of surrealism lies in "reconciling dialectically these two terms which are so violently contradictory for adult man: perception, representation; and in bridging the gap that separates them. . . . It tends to give ever greater freedom to instinctive impulses, and to break down the barrier raised before civilized man, a barrier which the primitive and the child ignore." This last sentence should be noted in reference to the related material included in the current exhibition.

Georges Hugnet, in his essay on Surrealism which accompanies

Like Cézanne and Renoir, who avoided the pitfalls of Impressionism by maintaining their independence, these contemporary individualists far exceed the performance of the artists subscribing to the movement. With these should be included two artists independent of the Dada-Surrealist school, Pierre Roy and Federico Castellón. The mystic, unexpected and hushed beauty of Chirico's paintings, especially of *Nostalgia of the Infinite* marks Chirico, the main forerunner of Surrealism, as the true master of the movement. Strange acquaintances are made on the walls of the Museum. In one room is an exquisite fifteenth century painting by Giovanni de Paolo of Siena. In another room is a photograph of fantastic architecture by Gaudi of Spain. In still another

December 12, 1936

SWAN JAN 21 1937



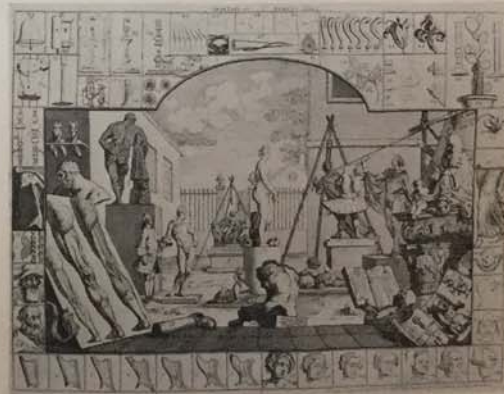
GIVEN ANONYMOUSLY TO THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

"THE HAT MAKES THE MAN" BY MAX ERNST, 1920, IN COLLAGE

the catalogue, discusses the Surrealist worship of the marvellous: "During the course of Surrealist development, outside all forms of idealism, outside the opiates of religion, the marvellous comes to light within *reality*. It comes to light in dreams, obsessions, preoccupations, in sleep, fear, love, chance; in hallucinations, pretended disorders, follies, ghostly apparitions, escape mechanisms and evasions; in fancies, idle wanderings, poetry, the supernatural and the unusual; in empiricism, in *superreality*. This element of the marvellous, relegated for so long to legends and children's fairy tales, reveals now in a true light, in a Surrealist light, the immanent reality and our relations to it."

Subjective expression aroused by a sort of self-mesmerism, gave rise to automatic writing, a spontaneous registration of the artist's subconscious impulses, of his uncontrolled thoughts. Such may be found among certain lyrical passages by Klee, Kandinsky, Masson, and Miro. *Collage* reached greater development in the composite illustrations for Ernst's *collage* novels. A new process called *frottage* was invented in which the surface design of a material was reproduced by rubbing. Composite irrational pictures also consumed the attention of the Surrealists and the "exquisite corpse" made its appearance ("experiments in collective drawing done in sections, the paper being covered or folded after each drawing and passed to the next artist so that he does not see what has already been drawn"). But it remained for Dali to introduce the baffling subjectivity of paranoia in objective descriptions of systemized delusion.

Surrealism, then, encompasses a great variety of techniques and preoccupations but its universal appeal is to the irrationality of the dream world. With this as a basis we can hurry over the twentieth century pioneers—Chirico, Kandinsky, Chagall, Klee, and Picasso.



LENT BY JAY LEVDA

FRONTISPIECE TO "THE ANALYSIS OF BEAUTY" BY HOGARTH

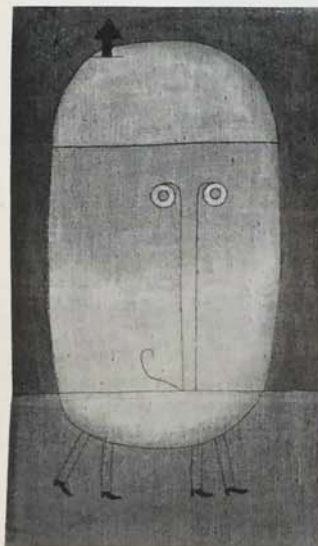
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	ACG	Series/Folder:	42

THE ART NEWS

December 12, 1936

Like Cézanne and Renoir, who avoided the pitfalls of Impressionism by maintaining their independence, these contemporary individualists far exceed the performance of the artists subscribing to the movement. With these should be included two artists independent of the Dada-Surrealist school, Pierre Roy and Federico Castellón. The mystic, unexpected and hushed beauty of Chirico's paintings, especially of *Nostalgia of the Infinite* marks Chirico, the main forerunner of Surrealism, as the true master of the movement.

Strange acquaintances are made on the walls of the Museum. In one room is an exquisite fifteenth century painting by Giovanni de Paolo of Siena. In another room is a photograph of fantastic architecture by Gaudi of Spain. In still another room is a drawing by Ganz, a child of six,

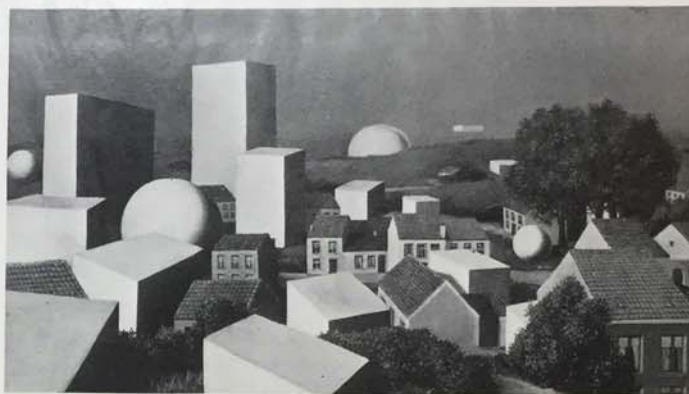


LENT BY SIDNEY JANIS

"MASK OF FEAR" BY PAUL KLEE, 1932

a drawing by a psychopathic patient, a watercolor by a Czechoslovakian peasant, a cartoon by Rube Goldberg and, hideous beyond all measure, a cup, saucer, and spoon covered with rabbit's fur, by Oppenheim. An almost endless list of seeming incongruities becomes boring, but never the exhibition.

Each object included in the following divisions of fantastic art should bear close scrutiny in reference to its particular type of fantasy and to the legitimacy of its inclusion in an exhibition that is pre-eminently Dada-Surrealist and in which fantastic art consequently has its *raison d'être* merely in its relation to these post war movements: the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the French Revolution to the Great War; artists independent of the Dada-Surrealist movements; comparative material (art of children, art of the insane, folk art, commercial and journalistic art, miscellaneous objects and pictures with a Surrealist character, scientific



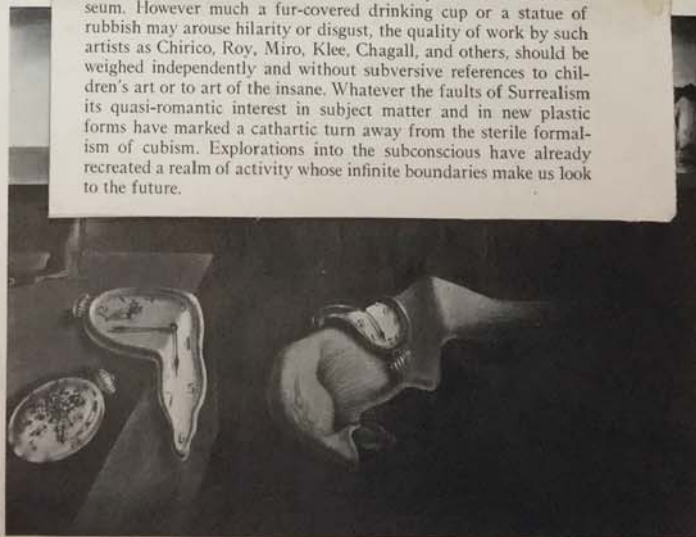
LENT BY LEON KOCHINITZKY

RENE MAGRITTE: "MENTAL CALCULUS": CUBISTIC INFLUENCE ON SURREALISM

objects). These are left to the public which must ponder over and put into order a rather chaotic lot, at times instructive as well as entertaining.

The danger of superficial resemblances has already been mentioned. Are these remote but similar appearing objects really comparable to the Surrealist productions which are motivated by a non-rational dream logic? Is Hogarth's frontispiece to his book *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753) more than a pictorially reasoned explanation of his thesis concerning the properties that make a great art—a thesis developed on purely rational lines? If *Memento Mori* (eighteenth century French) is compared with Dali's *The Font* the logical reconstruction of familiar symbols in the first will contrast significantly with the subjective symbolism of the latter—mystical and unintelligible. Pure designs by Georgia O'Keefe were perhaps considered fantastic because of the representation of a cow's skull, however direct its portrayal. Probably the most disconcerting is the inclusion of Beall's multiple image of Roosevelt, which is nothing more than a technical trick completely lacking in fantasy.

Although in many instances it is impossible to know whether the artists were unwitting Surrealists, there are times when it is obvious that the "fantasy" is merely a visual representation dominated by the ordinary laws of cause and effect and as such has no relationship to the irrational logic of Surrealism. But the exhibition offers far more than negative stimulation. Precursors of Dali's anthropomorphic furniture are discovered in the amusing engravings by Larressin (seventeenth century French) and in the etchings by Bracelli. Double images also by Dali are plastically echoed in a painting in the tradition of Arcimboldo. Klee's bewitching *Mask of Fear* has parallels in young Ganz's *Spirits* while a drawing by Hoisington (aged 11) has resemblances to Masson's pictography of the subconscious. Objects assembled by a psychopathic patient are not unlike Picabia's work. (Continued on page 22)



COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

"THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY," 1931, BY DALI. A WELL-KNOWN PROTAGONIST

object matter and technique. The collage, a development of Picasso's papers collés, gave the Dadaists an opportunity to collect discarded objects and combine them in startling representations. Hausmann's *Head* (1919) is composed of random pieces of newspaper pasted together in the suggestive shape of a head while Hoch's *Collage* (1920) is a more complicated assemblage of pasted items. Animated objects by Ernst, with such anti-aesthetic titles as *A cop-per plate*, *A rubber towel*, *A key*, *A drain pipe*, *A tubular man* illustrate the "mechanic-morphic" character of Dada so comparable in appearance to the seventeenth century etchings of Giovanni Bracelli. "Rayographs" by Man Ray and ready-made objects by Duchamp illustrate Dada's elevation of the accidental and of the commonplace as substitutes for works of art. *Collages* by Arp, which assume their color and shape by random cutting, also exalt the chance object. Coöperative effort by Ernst and Arp produced the *Fata Morgana* (*Fabrication de tableaux garantis météorologiques*), a series of collages. If Picabia's mechanical charts and Schwitters' collage, *Radialing World*, repulse the visitor they have achieved precisely what they set out to do. It was Schwitters who

12

13

	Collection:	Series/Folder:
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	AC9	42

A R T

Marvelous & Fantastic

(See front cover)

Inside the front door of Manhattan's Museum of Modern Art this week, oblong slabs of glass painted with black stripes revolved steadily under a six foot pair of red lips painted by Artist Man Ray. In other galleries throughout the building were a black felt head with a necklace of cinema film and zippers for eyes; a stuffed parrot on a hollow log containing a doll's leg; a teacup, plate and spoon covered entirely with fur; a picture painted on the back of a door from which dangled a dollar watch, a plaster crab and a huge board to which were tacked a mousetrap, a pair of baby shoes, a rubber sponge, clothespins, a stiff collar, pearl necklace, a child's umbrella, a braid of auburn hair and a number of hairpins twisted to form a human face. There were in addition, books, prints and paintings ranging from the 15th to the 20th Century, from Pieter Bruegel to contemporary Peter Blume. Having done its best to explain abstract art to the U. S. public last spring (TIME, March 9), the Museum of Modern Art was now attempting to explain another exotic movement with an equally important show broadly titled *Exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism*, or *Art of the Marvelous and Fantastic*.

Fantastic Art has always existed, always will as long as men have illogical minds and unruly imaginations. The Museum's walls historically carried fantastic art from the horror pictures of medieval Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel, through the engravings of Hogarth, to the comic cartoons of Rube Goldberg and the frustrated drawings of James Thurber. Prominently displayed as examples of fantastic art were copies of Edward Lear's *Nonsense Rhymes*, Lewis Carroll's *Jabberwocky*. This week's exhibition did not disdain the art of the frankly insane. There was a panel of wild designs by a crazed French banknote engraver, a drawing of something like a perverted rooster from the inspired brush of an ecstatic Czech (see p. 61).

Dada is something newer, different, a bewilderment that affected the art world of Europe for a few shell-shocked years during and immediately after the War. The object of dadaism was a conscious attack on reason, a complete negation of everything, the loudest and silliest expression of post-War cynicism. "I affirm," wrote early Dadaist Hans Arp, "that Tristan Tzara discovered the word dada on the 8th of February, 1916, at 6 o'clock in the evening . . . in the Terrace Café in Zurich. I was there with my twelve children when Tzara pronounced for the first time this word, which aroused a legitimate enthusiasm in all of us." (Later Dadaist Richard Huelsenbeck claimed: ". . . it was I who pronounced the word dada [hobby-horse] for the first time.") In moments of harmony and logic which they affected to despise, dadaists admitted that their object was "to spit in the eye of the world."

A leader of the dadaists, later to be one of the most important surrealists, was a young German painter named Max Ernst. Cologne still remembers the dada exhibition organized by Max Ernst and Hans Arp in 1920. The entrance to the exhibition was through a public lavatory. Gallery-goers were given hatchets to smash any pictures they did not approve and a young girl in a white communion



Museum of Modern Art
ARTIST ERNST

. . . wanted to spit in the world's eye.

dress stood on a platform reciting obscene poems.

The same year Paris dadaists gave a "Festival" in the respectable Salle Gaveau Concert Hall. The program bore the announcement: "Personal Appearance of Charlie Chaplin. The dadaists will pull their hair out in public." Neither event occurred, nor did such promised attractions as the first performance of *Symphonic Vaseline* by Tristan Tzara to be played by an orchestra of 20. Instead, young conservatives in the pit turned dadaists themselves, hurled tomatoes and hunks of raw meat (procured from a nearby butcher shop) at the stage while the dadaists volleyed back the missiles with delighted gusto. The owner of the building, Mme Gaveau, shouted furious protests from her box.

The black felt head with the zipper eyes, the stuffed parrot on the hollow log that appeared at the Modern Museum are typical dadaist artifacts, incorrigibly senseless but regarded by their owners as good examples of a movement that still has vivid memories.

Surrealism. An art movement without hope or object cannot last long. Dadaist Max Ernst in his desire to spit in the eye of the world was experimenting about this time with what he calls his *collages*: fantastic pictures made by cutting apart old engravings and rearranging them to make bustling ladies with lions' heads, assassins with angels' wings, strange trees growing from horses' backs, etc. Examining these and other dadaist creations, Poet André

Breton, who frequently dresses entirely in green, smokes a green pipe, drinks a green liqueur and has a sound knowledge of Freudian psychology, discovered behind all this a newer and betterism. In the autumn of 1924 he wrote his *Manifesto of Surrealism*, and a word and a school were born. Excerpt:

"Surrealism rests in the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association neglected heretofore; in the omnipotence of the dream and in the disinterested play of thought. . . . We who have not given ourselves to processes of filtering, who through the medium of our work have been content to be the silent receptacle of many echoes . . . are perhaps yet serving a much nobler cause."

Surrealism in plainer language is an attempt to explore the subconscious mind and to evoke emotional reactions through the illogical juxtaposition of objects. The difference between the cubists and present day abstract painters on one hand, and dadaists and surrealists on the other is basic, easily grasped. Abstract painters think of their pictures and statues as objects devoid of meaning, sufficient unto themselves. Surrealist art is still based on reproduction, one reason that its ablest exponents cling to the finicky technique of Victorian miniature painters.

Not all surrealists are serious. Some strive diligently to apply the Breton esthetic, while others are merely frivolous dabblers and assemblers of miscellaneous junk. Nevertheless, one thing almost all surrealists have in common is an instinct for dramatic titles. Thumbing through the catalog last week gallery goers lifted eyebrows at the following items:

Melancholy and Mystery of a Street (de Chirico).

The King and Queen Traversed by Swift Nudes (Marcel Duchamp).

Bewitched in the Zoo (Paul Klee).

Leaves and Novels (Hans Arp).

The Little Tear Gland that Says Tic Tac (Max Ernst).

Object which does not Praise Times Past (Francis Picabia).

Students of surrealism rank with Fournier Breton and converted Dadaist Max Ernst, several practitioners of equal or greater importance. There is the able Italian Giorgio de Chirico, who, besides his familiar studies of prancing horses and Roman columns, likes to paint surrealist views of long deserted streets in dream cities, adding to one work a startling note by carefully painting realistic tea biscuits on the end of a painted cart. There is Philadelphia-born Man Ray, who is not only an able painter but manages to imbue Rayograph pictures of bits of wire, corks and lumps of sugar with exactly the eerie quality that surrealists desire. Least concerned with sexual symbolism and one of the most commercially successful of surrealists is genteel, dapper Pierre Roy, whose gay arrangements of bright ribbons, bits of seashells, sticks and empty wine glasses have long charmed socialites, advertising art directors and smartchart editors. But surrealism would never have attracted its present attention in the U. S. were it not for a handsome 32-year-old

*The word surrealist was first used in 1917 when late Poet Guillaume Apollinaire published his play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, *Drame Surrealiste*.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC9

Series.Folder:

42

Catalan with a soft voice and a clipped cinemactor's mustache, Salvador Dali.

Dali. Artist Dali was born in Figueras near Barcelona in 1904, as a child developed a strong persecution mania and a wholehearted admiration for the works of his friend and countryman, Pablo Picasso. Salvador Dali entered the Academy in Madrid, was quickly expelled for insubordination. As an art student he reached Paris in 1927 when surrealism had yet to make any headlines but was the talk of the Montparnasse cafés.

Surrealism suited his extraordinary technical facility as a draughtsman, his morbid nature. Salvador Dali, with exquisite drawing and brilliant color, began to paint his nightmares on pieces of panel hardly bigger than postcards. He not only made surrealist paintings, he wrote surrealist poems, helped produce the first two surrealist films: *Le Chien Andalou* and *L'Age d'Or*. The first had a great deal to do with pianos filled with carcasses of dead donkeys. In the latter the great seduction scene to which the whole film rises is symbolized by a view of a bedroom window through which are thrown a blazing pine tree, an enormous plow, an Archbishop, a giraffe and a cloud of feathers.

Salvador Dali was first brought to the U. S. and given an exhibition in 1934 under the sponsorship of Dealer Julien Levy. Immediately one picture created a sensation. Entitled *The Persistence of Memory*, it showed a group of watches, limp as dead flounders and crawling with insects, drooping from the branches of a dead tree by the seaside, all this on a panel the size of a sheet of typewriter paper and painted in color as brilliant as a Flemish primitive. It now belongs to the Museum of Modern Art and was a headliner in last week's exhibition. Other interesting Dalis exhibited included a drawing, fine as an Italian master's, of a nude woman with a body made of half-open bureau drawers, and a painting of a group of African natives squatting before a dome-shaped hut (see p. 61).

Artist Dali who wears a knitted Catalan liberty cap whenever possible, takes surrealism in dead earnest, but has a faculty for publicity which should turn any circus pressagent green with envy. On his first arrival in the U. S. he solemnly explained: "I used to balance two broiled chops on my wife's shoulders, and then by observing the movement of tiny shadows produced by the accident of the meat on the flesh of the woman I love while the sun was setting, I was finally able to attain images sufficiently lucid and appetizing for exhibition in New York." He was taken up by swank New York socialites and in his honor was held a fancy dress ball that is still the talk of the West Fifties. Mme Dali wore a dress of transparent red paper and a headdress made of boiled lobsters and a doll's head. Artist Dali wore a glass case on his chest containing a brassière.

Six months ago he gave a lecture on art in London, stomped down the aisle to the dais wearing a deep-sea diving suit, a jeweled dagger at his belt (carrying a billiard cue in one hand and leading a pair of Russian wolfhounds with the other). Nearly overcome by heat before the helmet could be unscrewed, he explained: "I just wanted to show that I was plunging deeply into the human mind."



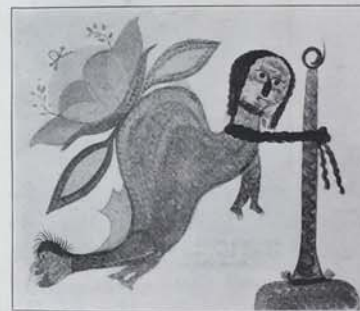
Photograph by Soichi Sunami for The Museum of Modern Art

BEYOND REALISM is the artistic goal of Salvador Dali's view of African natives sprawling in the sun. Upended, it becomes a face, illustrates the basic principle of surrealism: the power of dissociated objects to inspire imagination.

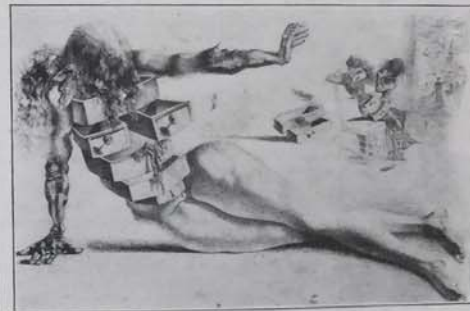
SURREALISM



OLD STUFF is this fantastic 17th Century French engraving. For new see below.



THIS WHATNOT was painted "in a state of ecstasy" by a Czech. Surrealists consider insanity no bar to artistic production.



SKILLFUL as the ancient, odd "Cabinet Maker's Costume" directly above is Dali's *City of Drawers*, but Dali substitutes for Nicolas Larmessin's childish fantasy characteristic surrealist suggestions of Freudian frustration.



MAMA, PAPA IS WOUNDED! is the typically arresting title of these hairy sticks, worms, clouds, beans by Surrealist Yves Tanguy.



LUNAR ASPARAGUS is the name of these weird wands by Surrealist Max Ernst. Surrealists do not limit their theory to painting. Sculpture, poetry, plays, films have also been produced.



Biscuits appear on the canvas in *Evangelical Still Life* by famed Surrealist Giorgio de Chirico.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series/Folder:

42

FANTASTIC ZANIES OF PAINTER'S BRUSH

Dadaism and Surrealism Embraced in Bewildering Exhibit

The Marx Brothers of the art world are displayed, in all their unrestrained glory, in an exhibition of Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism at the Museum of Modern Art in New York this week.

Many visitors, to whom Surrealism* is just another ism, and Dada** has always been the first word bumbled by an infant, were bewildered enough by the 700-odd paintings and objects that abound throughout the Museum's four floors (see cut).

"If these guys are right, I don't want to be," one viewer remarked to his companion.

But they felt their last grip on sanity slipping when they discovered two old friends and stand-bys included with the zanies of brush and canvas—Walt Disney, Mickey Mouse's mentor, and Rube Goldberg (weighted in the catalog under the dignity of Reuben Lucius Goldberg), creator of the incredible comic-strip scientist, Prof. Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, A. K.

Disney is represented by a wolf pacifier, four frames from his animated film, "Three Little Wolves." Goldberg offers three apocryphal inventions: a bait-digger for fishing; an automatic lather brush for barbers; a device for keeping buttonhole flowers fresh.

*SURREALISM daubed Paris during unrest following World War, was defined by its leader, André Breton, as: "Pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express, verbally, in writing or by other means, the real process of thought. Thought's dictation, in the absence of all control exercised by the reason and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations. Surrealism rests in the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association neglected heretofore. In the omnipotence of the dream and in the disinterested play of thought. It tends definitely to do away with all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in the solution of the principal problems of life."

**DADA: In 1916, a Spanish painter, Joan Miró (later among leaders of Surrealism), invented Dadaism. It had no technique and no principles, beyond suppressing all relation between thought and expression. Its followers sewed onto their paintings bits of cloth, orange-peels, or whatever hit their fancy. Translated, means hobby-horse.

Tho Goldberg's absurdities seem a part of the twentieth century, there are two entries in the show that parallel his humor while predating him by centuries. Filippo Morghen concocted a Machine for Bisecting an Opossum, and made an etching of it in 1784. And in the early 1800's, an unknown Italian artist recorded devices he called New Machine for Cutting Too Long Tongues at a Fixed Price, and Machine for Perfecting the Body Free of Charge. He painted the plans in gay water-colors.

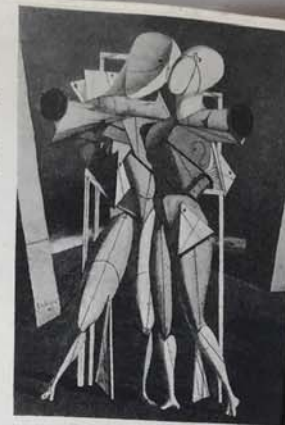
When most visitors arrived at the point where they felt like Alice at the Mad Hatter's Tea Party, they were face to face with a drawing her author, Lewis Carroll, had run up—a facsimile illustration from the original manuscript showing Alice underground.

Other eye-popping items:

A fur-lined and covered teacup, saucer and spoon, lent by the artist, Meret Oppenheim.

Man Ray's (French photographer and painter) nine-foot-wide, two-foot-high canvas of a well-rouged mouth floating in a cloudy sky. The same artist's painting "Eye," a human sight organ in which the iris is a mass of clouds and blue sky, caused as much disturbance.

Locomotive—"Agog" and "Mask," submitted by Wallace Putnam. The former is the artist's interpretation of a locomotive, head-on, made of such items as an inverted lampshade, cotton covered with two ostrich-plumes rising from it, a rolling pin, umbrella frames, two well-worn rubbers, a glass insulator, a garbage-pail cover, and two oversized, empty evaporated milk tins. The mask, some six feet high and half as wide, is covered with a string of white beads, a dirty elastic knee-supporter, a tooth-brush, coat-hanger, shoe-tree, powder-puff, mouse-trap, nail-brush, sink-



"Hector and Andromache," by de Chirico

stopper, curtain rings, and more than a hundred other odd, assorted tit-bits.

An indescribable canvas by Max Ernst entitled "The Gramineous Bicycle Garbished With Bells and Pilfered Greybeards and the Echinoderms Bending the Spine to Look for Caresses." His painted plaster on wood with dangling objects called "Loplop Introduces a Young Girl," caused many eyebrows to arch.

Nineteen drawings, water-colors, embroderies and objects done by insane patients.

Jokesters—An exhibition of this type is always easy prey for the practical joker. A similar show in Paris several years ago exhibited a shovel, submitted by a well-known but discontented artist as an example of perfect symmetry. Last summer, at the International Surrealist Exhibition in London, B. Howitt-Lodge, a famed animal and portrait painter, hoaxed the New Burlington Galleries.

The Museum of Modern Art runs less chance of being duped. The Director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., an authority on the schools of art that are akin to Gertrude Stein's writing, selected only accredited objects with a knowledge that forestalled pranks.

The collection will remain in New York until January 17. It will then be shown in Philadelphia, Boston, Springfield, Milwaukee, San Francisco and other cities throughout the country.

THE LITERARY DIGEST

December 12, 1936

General Offices
116 East 59The ART DIGEST
THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF ART

Vol. XI

New York, N. Y. 15th December, 1936

No. 6

Twenty Issues
per year \$3

Descent into Hell: Hieronymus Bosch (1460?-1516). Lent by Metropolitan Museum

Modern Museum a Psychopathic Ward as Surrealism Has Its Day

AN ELEVENTH-HOUR REPRIEVE, based upon documents supporting a plea of insanity, may yet be granted to the World on the eve of its scheduled self-execution, if objects just put on exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in a sensational dossier entitled *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*, is admitted to the evidence. The documents, showing signs of dementia-praeox in the defendant's 15th year which had developed into a pronounced paranoia by the 20th birthday, may provide the legal loophole for acquittal of the charge of brutal assault and murder of Common Sense. Implicated in the sudden turn of the case are Leonardo da Vinci, a fur-lined cup and saucer, Mickey Mouse and an empty tin can.

While expert opinion in New York City agrees that the defense at last has an airtight case, the only official statement to be had was the cryptic announcement, issued through the Museum office: "Dada." At this, some relatives of the aged victim, from the seclusion of the National Academy, promptly retorted with the following bulletin: "Gaga!"

The exhibit includes seven hundred catalogued items produced between the 15th century and the present day in painting, drawing, print-making literature, photography, sculpture, montage, collage, architecture, carpentry, masonry, dealcomania, and the gentle art, no less, of letting a thread drop to the floor, glueing it to where it falls and then ripping up the board and hanging it on the wall. This latter activity, which is alleged to investigate the laws of chance, is represented by three fine specimens.

The theme of this year's sensation at the Modern Museum is a historical presentation of the marvelous in both art and artifice. Believing that there must exist some common aesthetic in the bizarre productions such as Bosch's *Descent into Hell*, certain Dürer en-

gravings of the more symbolic type and Ligier Richier's skeletal sculpture, on the one hand, and the Dada and Surrealist movements on the other hand, Mr. Barr has thereupon gathered together this large collection of the fantastic in art. The bulk of the exhibition is in the Dada and Surrealist mode and presented in something of a historical manner. A comprehensive catalogue and also two essays on the art by Georges Hugnet, both issued as Museum bulletins.

Since the display is strange enough to startle even the sophisticates of New York, and since

Game of Legs in a Key of Dreams:
LEONOR FINI (1935)



it is so fraught with Armory Show possibilities of reverberation, a brief survey of the two movements follows. Dadaism was the nihilist expression of the Great War period that followed, in art, the decadent period of Cubism (when the latter developed into a fantastic and arbitrary dislocation of form). Dadaism sought to destroy art, its arch-enemy. The man most influential in its development was Marcel Duchamp. The centers of the early development were Paris, Zurich, New York (at Steiglitz's "291"), and in Germany.

From the start, the movement was closely linked to similar expressions in literature and politics. The name "Dada" was hit upon by opening a dictionary at random. The program of Dadaism was a slightly more refined and esoteric practice of college boy pranks in the field of the arts. In the first New York Independents Exhibition in 1917, Duchamp entered a porcelain toilet accessory with the title *Fountain*, signed "R. Mutt," in order to test the impartiality of the jury and to signify his revolt to art. Though the entry was quickly thrown out, the attempt was a typical expression of the Dada point of view. On the continent the movement lasted until the early twenties.

In volume I of *THE ART DIGEST*, ten years ago, the Surrealist movement was announced as the newest ism in Paris, "which was rising phoenix-like from the ashes of dead Dadaism." Dadaism had burned itself out and a number of former members rallied themselves around a group headed by André Breton to form the Surrealists. During this early period of Surrealism the greatest activity was in literature. The name itself was taken from the subtitle *Drame Surrealiste* that Apollinaire had given to his play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*. Breton appropriated the word to mean "Pure psychic automatism . . . Thought's dictation, all ex-



Museum of Modern Art

Water-color by Czechoslovakian peasant in a state of ecstasy

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC6

Series/Folder:

42

THE NEW YORKER

DECEMBER 19, 1936



At the moment, the town is practically crawling with surrealist exhibitions. There is Joan Miró at the Matisse Gallery, and Salvador Dalí at the Julien Levy Gallery, and Man Ray at the Valentine Gallery; and, for good measure, Bedlam and Bloomingdale and Cloud-Cuckoo-Land and Cockaigne have broken loose at the Museum of Modern Art. If you don't know yet what surrealism is, you will never have a better chance of finding out for yourself—or increasing your present confusion. Is it a passing fashion or a new sphere of painting? Is it a variety of art or a metaphysical theory of the universe or a subversive political weapon or a series of practical jokes? Is it a meaningless revolt or a revolt against meaning? Or merely paranoia become playful? All these are weighty questions. One or two of them, incidentally, have something to do with art.

Usually, one of the easiest ways to place a movement is to ask where it began and who started it. Some say surrealism began with a group of young European exiles who sat in a café in Zurich in 1916, concocting a revolution in art called Dada (the art to end all art) at the very moment that Nikolai Lenin, a lover of the classics, was planning a revolution in politics. The two revolutions split at that point, but both were deeply in revolt against the heavy platitudes, the unctuous moralities, and the drab acceptances of the world of "reality," and they came together again in 1925, when everything fashionable had suddenly to prove its right to exist by showing that it was connected with Marxism. Most of the books and manifestoes that have been written on surrealism confine themselves to these Continental origins. They therefore neglect the wild surrealist element that has been present in American art and in American humor from the very beginning.

One of the great merits of the Modern Museum show is that it presents the immediate origins and achievements of surrealism against a broad background of fantastic and irrational art that goes back to the Middle Ages. Scarcely anything that has conceivably

paralleled the present movement or contributed anything to it has been neglected by Mr. Alfred Barr: now a painting by Hieronymus Bosch, now a photomontage from the New York *Evening Graphic*. The final result of such inclusiveness and exhaustiveness is that one begins to find surrealist images sticking out of every hole and cranny, and one loses sight of two or three of the great landmarks in painting that lead up to surrealism. These landmarks, though included in the show, are swamped in the weltering, dreamlike confusion of it. If I single them out, it may make the going a little easier.

The main divisions of surrealist art are distinct, but have a common foundation in the mind: the pathologically irrational, the comic, and the unconscious. Each of these sides is in opposition to the conceptions and practical needs of everyday life; each of them stresses the private and the subjective and the whimsical, and belittles the public and the objective and the dutiful. The first, and at the moment the most

engrossing, side of surrealist art begins with Goya. He etched a whole series of prints, called "Caprices," which for more than a century seemed only a perverse mystery to most lovers of art, prints with strange demonic figures leering savagely or obscenely at the spectator, or with natural figures in crazy attitudes, committing obscure follies. These prints seem to rise, like a red mist, from the murder and torture Goya depicted in the plates on the horrors of war. Today, Goya's images recur too frequently in the photographic sections of the newspapers to be dismissed as "unreal," and it is perhaps no accident that a country that has known brutal irrationality in so many forms should have contributed so many leaders to the surrealist movement today—Picasso, Dalí, Miró. If this were all there is to surrealism, one might justify Mr. David Gascoyne's beginning his "Brief Survey" with Gilles de Retz and the Marquis de Sade.

The comic side of surrealism is familiar to the English-speaking world from "Mother Goose" onward. "Hey-diddle-diddle, the cat and the fiddle," the Jaberwocky, the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bô, and the folk tales of Munchausen and Paul Bunyan have had their counterparts in an equally crazy folk art, like the china cat decorated with flowers in

the present show. This part of surrealist art flourishes on the incongruous and the unexpected. It is at its best, in painting, in Dalí's picture of the wilted watches, in those curious collections of objects that Roy assembles in his canvases, or in those marvellous montages of old woodcuts that Max Ernst has put together with such loving patience. One does not have to read Bergson's disquisition on the significance of laughter to enjoy this part of surrealism. Surely, the very worst compliment one can pay it, even when it is savage or sinister, is to greet it with a respectfully solemn face. If Goya contributed the sadistic nightmare, Edward Lear discovered the magical release of nonsense. (But surrealism has its practical side, too. It was a surrealist experimenter who had the courage to put sugar into a concrete mix to make it stronger.)

The last ingredient in surrealism is the unconscious. Ever since the Renaissance, painters have conscientiously been painting only what they could see with their eyes. "I don't paint angels," said Courbet, "because I have never seen one." But images of all sorts are perpetually welling up out of the unconscious: modern man, concentrated upon conquering Nature and piling up riches, penalizes daydreaming and forces these "irrelevant" images back or keeps them from germinating; he has invented a score of contraceptives for the imagination, and then is surprised to find his life has become a sterile one. At night, however, the repressed images spring up again. These products of the unconscious are not necessarily sinister or macabre. In a more benign form, they took shape in the paintings and prints of Odilon Redon, as they had done in those of William Blake before him, and though Redon has had very little influence over the French, German, or Catalan surrealists, the benign unconscious activity he exhibited can be seen in the works of modern Americans like O'Keeffe and Dove.

If one judges surrealism by the aesthetic and human values that lie outside it, a good part of it is rubbish; its value lies not in what it so far has found but in the fact that it has opened up the gallery of a mine which may, with more adequate tools, be exploited

for more precious ore than that which has so far been brought to the surface. One of the most powerful and inventive of the European surrealists, Max Ernst, is only a moderately good painter; and if the earlier surrealist paintings of Chirico, spacious and noble in composition, still remain very fine, if Roy is always an admirable craftsman, and if Masson and Miró both have a graceful and deft touch, the quality of the paintings remains an incidental if not a negligible part of the whole movement. To judge the art fairly, one must realize that it is a symptom—a symptom of the disorder and brutality and chaos of the "real" world; an attempt through disintegration—as in a Freudian analysis—to dig down to a point solid enough to serve as a fresh foundation. With all its praise of the irrational, there is method in the surrealist madness.

Until a generation ago, only soothsayers and ignorant folk believed in dreams. It took the genius of Freud to combine the ordinary consciousness of the neurotic with the ordinary dreams of the normal man, and to see that there was an underlying identity; *dreams meant something*, and in a sense, the more irrational they were, the more they meant. We can no longer go around pretending that the world is the same world it was before Freud gave us this clue. What we can see and measure and count is only a part of the picture. The complete picture is not so clear and not so orderly as the mind, for practical purposes, would like to have it.

This is one of the great commonplaces of our generation; and the proof is that it has made its way into literature so thoroughly that no one bothers there to call it surrealist. In Virginia Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway" the returned soldier, Septimus, is suffering from a psychoneurosis, and this is the way she describes his feelings: "He lay very high, on the back of the world. The earth thrilled beneath him. Red flowers grew through his flesh; his stiff leaves rustled by his head. Music began clanging against the rocks up here.... It cannoned from rock to rock, divided, met in shocks of sound which rose in smooth columns (that music should be visible was a discovery) and became an anthem, an anthem twined round now by a shepherd piping." Need I point out that one has only to transfer these images onto canvas to have a complete surrealist painting?

Anything that can be imagined is real, and nothing is so real as an ob-

jects a scalding...
with rain he thinks
digging up dirt for
els an onion and c
he runs through p
of Jeweller's sign
to press again
ch blows direct p
does off roaches
of antique fan(K)
expose surface of
sks hound (sees)
and, thinking it is
to bury bone (as
who dies for it
ch head of his
sold just as he pu
out of ground for
is it easily.
only bird wakes u
the onion just s
ing too raw a di

ic art: Rube Gold

ldy Museum
the Public W

wire bird cage fi
s of marble that
mmeterregist
s of the surre
Not SNEER?
The Museum o
its Dada, Surre
rt Exhibition
eleven such pie
Dada, Marcel
ae museum had
including his 191
elain toilet entit
med R. Mutt. A
tment of a Mon
with a mustache
O.O.Q. Read i
letters sound l
it."

It start as an
ntil 1916 when
Zurich artists
and decided
lization. At ra
name from a F
happened to be
nd for four year
at didn't make
rapidly, attract
sts; but some

fantasia as well as examples of irrational art by psychopathic cases.

POST MORTEM: The exhibit made a definite impression on every visitor. No one could honestly brag that he came out as chipper as he entered. There was much too much symbolism hitting below the belt for even the most out-and-out extrovert not to feel some quiver of the unconscious.

But the main importance of the circus lay in its historical value. Dada passed on long ago; surrealism seems so near its last gasp that already a Post-Surrealist school has sprung up in Hollywood, and a great library has been produced as if in memory of things past.

Just before the show opened, the museum announced the acquisition of the most complete library of Surrealist literature in existence. Walter P. Chrysler Jr. had presented it with the collections of Paul Eluard and Dr. Camille Dausse. Eluard, French poet who has played an important part in the movement since its start, rounded out the books and magazines

along with catalogues, postcards, and complete bound files of the two important illustrated magazines, "La Revolution Surrealiste" and "Le Surrealisme au Service de la Revolution."

The Dausse group contains a number of original manuscripts. Books illustrated by de Chirico and Ernst; a folio of stencil plates by Man Ray, American artist-photographer; and nine volumes by Eluard are among the high spots.

OPPORTUNISTS: Eager to ride publicity waves for one of the art season's big events, many New York dealers last week hopped on the Surrealist showboat.

Pierre Matisse: One of the best-known Surrealist paintings, Joan Miró's "Dog Barking at the Moon," was absent from the Modern Museum's display. In an important exhibition of the Spanish painter's works, it attracted visitors to the Matisse Gallery.

Valentine: Another dealer fell in line with 36 drawings by Man Ray. Typical example: "Narcissus," a headless woman admiring the face she holds in her hands.

New Art Circle: Since 1911 J. R. Neumann, the gallery's director, has been collecting pictures by Marc Chagall. If visitors liked the samples of his work at the big exhibition, they found full representation in this one-man show.

Julien Levy: Dovetailing neatly with the museum's opening, Levy displayed paintings by Max Ernst and Leonor Fini. Miss Fini, Argentine-born Parisian, is a newcomer to the field, and her talent rates more attention than accorded by the museum.

Hope: For those who wish to look further into the complexities of the matter, Levy's book "Surrealism" (Black Sun Press, \$3) offers assure. Published last week, it blithely assures readers that anyone with an open mind can understand this complicated form of art.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC4

Series/Folder:

42

THE NEW YORKER



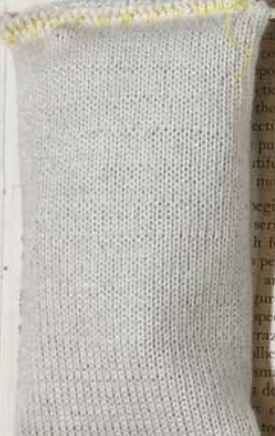
AT the moment, the town is practically crawling with surrealist exhibitions. There is Joan Miró at the Matisse Gallery, and Salvador Dalí at the Julien Levy Gallery, and Man Ray at the Valentine Gallery; and, for good measure, Bedlam and Bloomingdale and Cloud-Cuckoo-Land and Cockaigne have broken loose at the Museum of Modern Art. If you don't know yet what surrealism is, you will never have a better chance of finding out for yourself—or increasing your present confusion. Is it a passing fashion or a new sphere of painting? Is it a variety of art or a metaphysical theory of the universe or a subversive political weapon or a series of practical jokes? Is it a meaningless revolt or a revolt against meaning? Or merely paranoia become playful? All these are weighty questions. One or two of them, incidentally, have something to do with art.

Usually, one of the easiest ways to place a movement is to ask where it began and who started it. Some say surrealism began with a group of young European exiles who sat in a café in Zurich in 1916, concocting a revolution in art called Dada (the art to end all art) at the very moment that Nikolai Lenin, a lover of the classics, was planning a revolution in politics. The two revolutions split at that point, but both were deeply in revolt against the heavy platitudes, the unctuous moralities, and the drab acceptances of the world of "reality," and they came together again in 1925, when everything fashionable had suddenly to prove its right to exist by showing that it was connected with Marxism. Most of the books and manifestos that have been written on surrealism confine themselves to these Continental origins. They therefore neglect the wild surrealist element that has been present in American art and in American humor from the very beginning.

One of the great merits of the Modern Museum show is that it presents the immediate origins and achievements of surrealism against a broad background of fantastic and irrational art that goes back to the Middle Ages. Scarcely anything that has conceivably

paralleled the present movement contributed anything to it has been neglected by Mr. Alfred Barr: now painting by Hieronymus Bosch, now photomontage from the New York Evening Graphic. The final result, such inclusiveness and exhaustiveness that one begins to find surrealist images sticking out of every hole and cranny and one loses sight of two or three of the great landmarks in painting that lead up to surrealism. These landmarks, though included in the show, are swamped in the weltering, dreamlike confusion of it. If I single them out, may make the going a little easier.

The main divisions of the show



that a country that has known brutal irrationality in so many forms should have contributed so many leaders to the surrealist movement today—Picasso, Dalí, Miró. If this were all there is to surrealism, one might justify Mr. David Gascoyne's beginning his "Brief Survey" with Gilles de Retz and the Marquis de Sade.

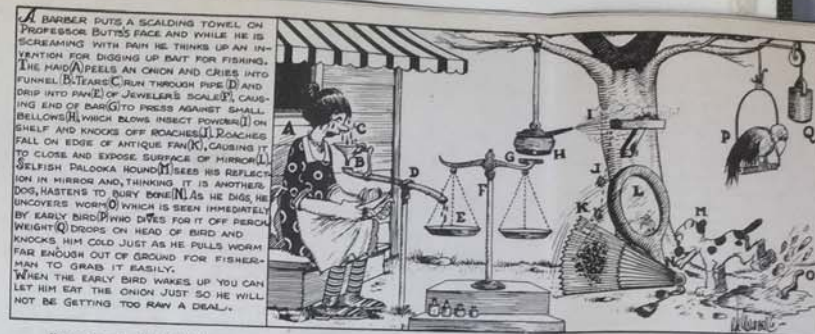
The comic side of surrealism is familiar to the English-speaking world from "Mother Goose" onward. "Hey diddle-diddle, the cat and the fiddle, the jiggerwocky, the Yonghy-Bonghy Bô, and the folk tales of Munchausen and Paul Bunyan have had their counterparts in an equally crazy folk art, like the china cat decorated with flowers in

session. In those words one might sum up the present attitude of the surrealists. Like every new school, they have willfully lost sight of the partial reality which they wish to supplement or replace; they deny the orderly, the rational, the coherent, the visible. But what they are doing, in fact, is to increase the scope of reality. They are exploring foul underground caverns where one hears only the whir and whistle of invisible bats; they are holding the manacled hands of prisoners in moldy dungeons; they are making their way, by touch rather than by sight, through slimy passageways that may bring them up to the surface of "normal" life with a better comprehension of what lies beneath. Like the modern psychoanalysts, the surrealists have approached the normal by way of the pathological. That follows inevitably from the fact that the willing, wishing, urging, passionate part of man's life has been slighted, stifled, and even banished altogether in favor of practical routines. Distrusting the imagination, we let it sneak back into life only in the guise of fancy dress or an even fancier disease—just as many of us never get a real opportunity for pleasurable idleness until we find ourselves on our backs in a hospital, recovering from the birth of a baby or an operation for appendicitis.

But it would be absurd to dismiss surrealism as crazy. Maybe it is our civilization that is crazy. Has it not used all the powers of the rational intellect, all the hard discipline of the practical will, to universalize the empire of meaningless war and to turn whole states into Fascist madhouses? There is more here than meets the eye. Demons, for the modern man, are no less real than electrons; we see the shadow of both flitting across the screen of visible reality. Surrealism makes us conscious of this fact; it arranges the necessary apparatus. Before we can become sane again, we must remove the greatest of hallucinations—the belief that we are sane now. Here surrealism, with its encouraging infantile gestures, its deliberately humiliating antics, helps break down our insulating and self-defeating pride. Even in perverse or sinister or silly forms, the surrealists are restoring the autonomy of the imagination. —LEWIS MUMFORD

Hildreth Harris, whose chauffeur was driving her in from New Jersey, sighed with relief as they crossed the Fifty-ninth Street bridge. From "The Heart Has Wings," by Faith Baldwin, in Collier's. As well she might.

December 19, 1936



Fantastic art: Rube Goldberg invents a way to dig bait ('If they want to make it seem profound, that suits me fine')



ART: Giddy Museum Exhibit Dizzies the Public With Dada

One large wire bird cage filled with sugar lumps of marble that support an 8-inch thermometer registering the temperature of the surroundings. TITLE: WHY NOT SNEEZE?

Last week the Museum of Modern Art opened its Dada, Surrealism, and Fantastic Art Exhibition and New Yorkers saw eleven such pieces by the bad boy of Dada, Marcel Duchamp. Some felt the museum had missed a bet by not including his 1917 masterpiece—a porcelain toilet entitled "Fountain" and signed R. Mutt. Also absent was his treatment of a Mona Lisa reproduction with a mustache and the letters L.H.O.O.Q. Read rapidly in French, the letters sound like "elle a chaud un cul."

Dada didn't start as an organized movement until 1916 when a group of war-weary Zurich artists drank too much wine and decided art had no place in civilization. At random they chose their name from a French dictionary—it happened to be dada (hobbyhorse)—and for four years exhibited anything that didn't make sense. The idea spread rapidly, attracting many leading artists; but some wearied of



In 1764, Filippo Morghen, Italian, 'bisected an opposum'

this latest form of nihilism. They replaced it with surrealism.

One stuffed green parrot perched on a short limb which is balanced on a smooth log with the center scooped out; from another part of the limb dangles a ball on a piece of string; on the inside of the log hangs a pink rayon stocking stuffed in the shape of a leg and wearing an evening slipper. The log rests in a black derby hat in whose brim is a painted map of the world and a celluloid fish. OBJECT—by Joan Miro.

Acclaimed the genius of surrealism, Miro eagerly subscribed to its principle of discovering and exploring "the more real than real world behind the real." Surrealism drew heavily on Freudian ideas of the subconscious and followed a wordy manifesto laid down in 1924 by the movement's founder, Andre Breton, poet-philosopher: "I believe in the future resolution of two states . . . dream and reality, into a sort of absolute reality, 'Surrealite'."

The present worldwide notoriety of the group is due to a single past master of publicity, Salvador Dalí. This young Spanish painter is known to the most

conservative for his "Persistence of Memory," a picture of molten watches dripping off tables and trees. He boosts the cause by such attention-getters as arriving for a lecture in a deep-sea diving suit and giving Surrealist fancy dress balls where any form of sexual symbolism is considered a successful costume.

A large naked woman reclining with head bent, her hair falling disheveled over her shoulders; she rests on her right muscle-bound arm, the left outstretched in a gesture of repulsion. One drawer grows out of her chest; two drawers with knobs from her breasts, with one drawer below out of which drops a bit of her stomach. In the background two smaller female figures sprout similar drawers as they sit on a chair of drawers. Far in the upper right a miniature scene of a city street with normal people strolling. ORR or DAWNS—by Dalí.

After these excursions into the "more real than real," the museum's retrospective glance at fantastic art seemed mild. On the fourth and last floor, it showed fifteenth- to eighteenth-century

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC6

Series.Folder:

42

THE NEW YORKER



At the moment, the town is practically crawling with surrealist exhibitions. There is Joan Miró at the Matisse Gallery, and Salvador Dalí at the Julien Levy Gallery, and Man Ray at the Valentine Gallery; and, for good measure, Bedlam and Bloomingdale and Cloud-Cuckoo-Land and Cockaigne have broken loose at the Museum of Modern Art. If you don't know yet what surrealism is, you will never have a better chance of finding out for yourself—or increasing your present confusion. Is it a passing fashion or a new sphere of painting? Is it a variety of art or a metaphysical theory of the

as political weath-
etrical jokes? Is
vult or a revolt
merely paranoia
these are weighty
two of them, in-
othing to do with

the easiest ways to
ask where it be-
it. Some say sur-
a group of young
to sit in a café in
necoting a revolu-
ida (the art to end
moment that Niko-
of the classics, was
in politics. The
at that point, but
revolt against the
unctious moralis-
acceptances of the
and they came to-
5, when everything
only to prove its
ving that it was

Most of the
that have been
written on surrealism confine them-
selves to these Continental origins. They
therefore neglect the wild surrealist
element that has been present in Ameri-
can art and in American humor from
the very beginning.

One of the great merits of the Modern Museum show is that it presents the immediate origins and achievements of surrealism against a broad background of fantastic and irrational art that goes back to the Middle Ages. Scarcely anything that has conceivably

paralleled the present movement contributed anything to it has been neglected by Mr. Alfred Barr; now painting by Hieronymus Bosch, now photomontage from the New York *Evening Graphic*. The final result is such inclusiveness and exhaustiveness that one begins to find surrealist images sticking out of every hole and cranny and one loses sight of two or three of the great landmarks in painting that lead up to surrealism. These landmarks, though included in the show, are swamped in the weltering, dreamlike confusion of it. If I single them out, I may make the going a little easier.

The main divisions of surrealist art are distinct, but have a common foundation in the mind: the pathologically irrational, the comic, and the unconscious. Each of these sides is in opposition to the conceptions and practical needs of everyday life; each of them stresses the private and the subjective and the whimsical, and belittles the public and the objective and the dutiful. The first, and at the moment the most

engrossing, side of surrealist art begins with Goya. He etched a whole series of prints, called "Caprices," which for more than a century seemed only a perverse mystery to most lovers of art prints with strange demonic figure leering savagely or obscenely at the spectator, or with natural figures in crazy attitudes, committing obscure follies. These prints seem to rise, like a plasma from the murder and torture Goya depicted in the plates on the horrors of war. Today, Goya's images recur too frequently in the photographic section of the newspapers to be dismissed as "unreal," and it is perhaps no accident that a country that has known brutal irrationality in so many forms should have contributed so many leaders to the surrealist movement today—Picasso, Dalí, Miró. If this were all there is to surrealism, one might justify Mr. David Gascoyne's beginning his "Brief Survey" with Gilles de Retz and the Marquis de Sade.

The comic side of surrealism is familiar to the English-speaking world from "Mother Goose" onward. "Hey diddle-diddle, the cat and the fiddle," the Jaberwocky, the Yonghy-Bonghy Bó, and the folk tales of Munchausen and Paul Bunyan have had their counterparts in an equally crazy folk art, like the china cat decorated with flowers in

session. In those words one might sum up the present attitude of the surrealists. Like every new school, they have willfully lost sight of the partial reality which they wish to supplement or replace; they deny the orderly, the rational, the coherent, the visible. But what they are doing, in fact, is to increase the scope of reality. They are exploring foul underground caverns where one hears only the whir and whistle of invisible bats; they are holding the manacled hands of prisoners in moldy dungeons; they are making their way, by touch rather than by sight, through slimy passageways that may bring them up to the surface of "normal" life with a better comprehension of what lies beneath. Like the modern psychoanalysts, the surrealists have approached the normal by way of the pathological. That follows inevitably from the fact that the willing, wishing, urging, passionate part of man's life has been slighted, stifled, and even banished altogether in favor of practical routines. Distrusting the imagination, we let it sneak back into life only in the guise of fancy dress or an even fancier disease—just as many of us never get a real opportunity for pleasurable idleness until we find ourselves on our backs in a hospital, recovering from the birth of a baby or an operation for appendicitis.

But it would be absurd to dismiss surrealism as crazy. Maybe it is our civilization that is crazy. Has it not used all the powers of the rational intellect, all the hard discipline of the practical will, to universalize the empire of meaningless war and to turn whole states into Fascist madhouses? There is more here than meets the eye. Demons, for the modern man, are no less real than electrons; we see the shadow of both fitting across the screen of visible reality. Surrealism makes us conscious of this fact; it arranges the necessary apparatus. Before we can become sane again, we must remove the greatest of hallucinations—the belief that we are sane now. Here surrealism, with its encouraging infantile gestures, its deliberately humiliating antics, helps break down our insulating and self-defeating pride. Even in perverse or sinister or silly forms, the surrealists are restoring the autonomy of the imagination. —LEWIS MUMFORD

Hildreth Harris, whose chauffeur was driving her in from New Jersey, sighed with relief as they crossed the Fifty-ninth Street bridge. From "The Heart Has Wings," by Faith Baldwin, in *Collier's*.

As well she might.

A BARBER PUTS A SCALDING TEA
PROFESSOR BUTTS FACE AND WHIS-
PERING FOR DIGGING UP BAIT FOR
THE HAIR. A PEEPS AN OUCH AND
FUNNEL B. TEARS C. RUN THROUGH
DRIP INTO FAN. E. OF JEWELRY'S SCAL-
ING END OF BAR. G. TO PRESS AGAIN
BELLOW. WHICH BLOWS INSECT PO-
SHELF AND KNOCKS OFF ROACHES. L
FALL ON EDGE OF ANTIQUE FAN. K. I
TO CLOSE AND EXPOSE SURFACE OF
BELLISH POLDOKA HOUND. M. SEES
ION IN MIRROR AND, THINKING IT IS
DOG, HASTENS TO BURY SOME. N. AS
UNCOVERS WORM. O. WHICH IS SEEN
BY EARLY BIRD. P. WHO DYES FOR IT
WEIGHT. Q. DROPS ON HEAD OF BUS
KNOCKS HIM COLD JUST AS HE PUTS
FAR ENOUGH OUT OF GROUND FOR
MAN TO GRAB IT EASILY.
WHEN THE EARLY BIRD WAKES UP
LET HIM EAT THE ONION JUST SINCE
NOT BE GETTING TOO RAW A DI-

Fantastic art: Rube Gold

December 19, 1936

NEWS WEEK

fantasia as well as examples of irrational art by psychopathic cases.

POST MORTEN: The exhibit made a definite impression on every visitor. No one could honestly brag that he came out as chipper as he entered. There was much too much symbolism hitting below the belt for even the most out-and-out extrovert not to feel some quiver of the unconscious.

But the main importance of the circus lay in its historical value. Dada passed on long ago; surrealism seems so near its last gasp that already a Post-Surrealist school has sprung up in Hollywood, and a great library has been produced as if in memory of things past.

Just before the show opened, the museum announced the acquisition of the most complete library of Surrealist literature in existence. Walter P. Chrysler Jr. had presented it with the collections of Paul Eluard and Dr. Camille Dausse. Eluard, French poet who has played an important part in the movement since its start, rounded up 129 Surrealist books and magazines along with 214 documents including catalogues, postcards, and complete bound files of the two important illustrated magazines, "La Revolution Surrealiste" and "Le Surrealisme au Service de la Revolution."

The Dausse group contains a number of original manuscripts. Books illustrated by de Chirico and Ernst; a folio of stencil plates by Man Ray, American artist-photographer; and nine volumes by Eluard are among the high spots.

OPPORTUNISTS: Eager to ride publicity waves for one of the art season's big events, many New York dealers last week hopped on the Surrealist showboat.

Pierre Matisse: One of the best-known Surrealist paintings, Joan Miró's "Dog Barking at the Moon," was absent from the Modern Museum's display. In an important exhibition of the Spanish painter's works, it attracted visitors to the Matisse Gallery.

Valentine: Another dealer fell in line with 36 drawings by Man Ray. Typical example: "Narcissus," a headless woman admiring the face she holds in her hands.

New Art Circle: Since 1911 J. B. Neumann, the gallery's director, has been collecting pictures by Marc Chagall. If visitors liked the samples of his work at the big exhibition, they found full representation in this one-man show.

Julien Levy: Dovetailing neatly with the museum's opening, Levy displayed paintings by Max Ernst and Leonor Fini. Miss Fini, Argentine-born Parisian, is a newcomer to the field, and her talent rates more attention than accorded by the museum.

Hore: For those who wish to look further into the complexities of the matter, Levy's book "Surrealism" (Black Sun Press, \$3) offers hope. Published last week, it blithely assures readers that anyone with an open mind can understand this complicated form of art.

ART: Ciddy Museum

Dizzies the Public W

One large wire bird cage filled with sugar lumps of marble that an 8-inch thermometer registers temperature of the surrealist.

Title: WHY NOT SNEEZ? Last week the Museum of Art opened its Dada, Surrealist, Fantastic Art Exhibition. New Yorkers saw eleven such pie bad boy of Dada, Marcel. Some felt the museum had bet by not including his 1911 piece—a porcelain toilet entitled "ain" and signed R. Mutt. A was his treatment of a Mondrian production with a mustache letters L.H.O.O.Q. Read it French, the letters sound like chaud an cul.

Dada didn't start as an movement until 1916 when a war-weary Zurich artists a much wine and decided a place in civilization. At rai chose their name from a E tionary—it happened to be a byhorse)—and for four years anything that didn't make idea spread rapidly, attract leading artists; but some v

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

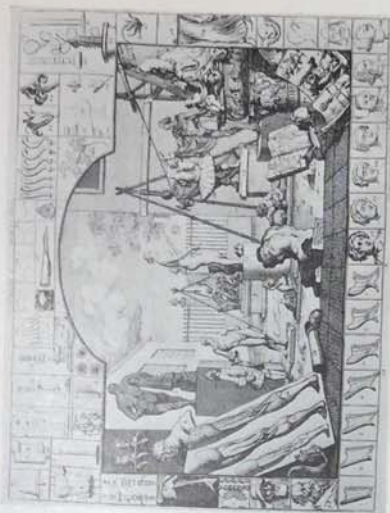
ACG

Series.Folder:

42

united by running. Composite irrational pictures also consumed the attention of the Surrealists and the "exquisite corpse" made its appearance ("experiments in collective drawing done in sections, the paper being covered or folded after each drawing and passed to the next artist so that he does not see what has already been drawn"). But it remained for Dali to introduce the baffling subjectivity of paranoia in objective descriptions of systemized delusion.

Surrealism, then, encompasses a great variety of techniques and preoccupations but its universal appeal is to the irrationality of the dream world. With this as a basis we can hurry over the twentieth century pioneers—Chirico, Kandinsky, Chagall, Klee, and Picasso.



FRONTISPIECE TO "THE ANALYSIS OF BEAUTY" BY HOGARTH
LENT BY JAY LEYDA



"THEY HAVE ALREADY RETAINED THEIR SEATS" BY GOYA
LENT BY MR. PHILIP HOPKIN

from the blood that was being spat by all the laws of society's logic. While Dada, which rapidly began to die in 1920, based its revolution on negation and on the destruction of reason, Surrealism under the direction of André Breton founded its movement in 1924 on the more positive basis of recreating a visual world governed by the illogical subconscious. In the first manifesto of Surrealism Breton marks its foundation: the union of two apparently contradictory states, dream and reality, into an absolute reality or sur-reality. Later he adds, "nous voyons dans une telle contradiction la cause même du malheur de l'homme mais nous y voyons aussi la source de son mouvement." The benefit of surrealism lies in "reconciling dialectically these two terms which are so violently contradictory for adult man: perception, representation; and in bridging the gap that separates them. . . . It tends to give ever greater freedom to instinctive impulses, and to break down the barrier raised before civilized man, a barrier which the primitive and the child ignore." This last sentence should be noted in reference to the related material included in the current exhibition.

Georges Hugnet, in his essay on Surrealism which accompanies

SEEING THE SHOWS

THE HIGH FANTASTICAL

So full of shapes is fancy that it alone is high fantastical.
—From Twelfth Night

THE WHIRLING glass of a rotating apparatus by Marcel Duchamp and a glaring eye of mirror glass on black wood by Man Ray send out a bold and provocative challenge to those who come unprepared for this excursion into the less travelled dirt roads of the imagination. The Museum of Modern Art's current exhibition, "Fantastic Art, Dada, and Surrealism," will be a bewildering itinerary for the uninitiated and a strenuous one even for those who are in complete sympathy with the Museum's intention "to present in an objective and historical manner the principal movements of modern art." On four crowded floors, the Museum has installed more than seven hundred objects, spanning five hundred years. Some are rare pieces of unusual artistic quality; some are brilliant nonsense by diabolical playboys; most of them are symptomatic of a cerebral rebellion against post-war chaos, against strangling conventions and the inhibitions which they produce. Art and *chic*, imagination and mechanical inventiveness, artificially induced paranoia and violent anarchy keep such close company in some rooms that the shock of their juxtaposition only magnifies the confusion of Dada itself. Can an "objective" whole possibly come forth from the *potpourri*, these fever charts of an ailing Bohemia whose only cure is the bitter medicine of reality, not the opiates of a dream world? The public will probably be quick to condemn it as quackery and humbug, and I am afraid the fault will not be entirely with the public. It is a colossal undertaking, of course, to reintegrate such convulsive elements so that the whole is not outshouted by its parts, and the Museum of Modern Art has again tackled a formidable task. Had there been a more ruthless selectivity on an aesthetic basis; a freer mingling of old and new "fantastic" art even at the risk of suggesting personally experienced psychological or technical analogies; and had the museum taken pedagogical command of the situation with useful explanatory notes similar to those that directed its visitors through last year's Cubism show, this exhibition might have made an enormous contribution to the artistic education of its public. As it is, there is some clarity of intention on the first floor, three magnificently hung rooms of unusual, imaginative twentieth-century material on the second, and increasing pedagogical chaos as we approach the top floor. The catalog and the museum bulletin are helpful Baedekers, the latter for its essays on Dada and Surrealism by Georges Hugnet, the former for its documentation and illustrations of exhibited material. But even in the former there are only vague clues to the reasons for the inclusion of some of the more problematic objects and

GERTRUDE R. BENSON ~



DALÍ: PARANOIAC HEAD, 1935, OIL ON WOOD
LENT TO THE MODERN MUSEUM'S EXHIBITION BY
EDWARD JAMES, LONDON. SEE ALSO NEXT PAGE

for the method of presentation. After two floors of the vaudeville and literature of Dada and the art of a handful of genuine practitioners of "fantastic" lyricism—like Douanier-Rousseau, Klee, Chagall, Picasso, de Chirico, Miro, Masson, and Ernst—we are in no mood to do justice to three immensely interesting rooms containing fanciful expressions from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. There are many curiosities among the oils,—perspective distortions, double images, nightmares, and horrors conjured up in cynical or moralizing moods. But it is in the prints and drawings that the artists of the past gave freest rein to their imaginations. Hallucinations, caricatures, linear witticisms, grotesques, dream-fantasies of a symbolical or lyrical character represent the famous flights of fancy of Bosch, Dürer, Holbein, Hogarth, Blake, Daumier, Goya, Grandville, and Redon. These artists are always the masters rather than the servants of their material. The personal symbolism of Redon and Blake, the wit of Busch, Lear, and Hogarth, the social indignation of Goya and Daumier undoubtedly have their counterparts in contemporary work and we wish that Mr. Barr had pointed these out more clearly. Artificial dams between periods only retard the natural flow of the past into the present that exhibitions of this kind are designed to encourage. In the fantastic expressions of yesterday the imagination was no less emancipated than it is today, but the technical canons still controlled much of what they did in line or in oil. It remained for the twentieth-century pioneers like Chagall, de Chirico, Marcel Duchamp, Kandinsky, Klee, and Picasso to tear down the "no trespassing" signs between the arts; to experiment with many mongrel materials and techniques, and to

THE WHIRLING glass of a rotator Marcel Duchamp and a glaring eye of mirror wood by Man Ray send out a bold and provocative to those who come unprepared for this excursion less travelled dirt roads of the imagination. The Modern Art's current exhibition, "Fantastic Art, Surrealism," will be a bewildering itinerary for a strenuous one even for those who are in and a strenuous one even for those who are in pathy with the Museum's intention "to present in a historical manner the principal movements and historical manner the principal movements art." On four crowded floors, the Museum more than seven hundred objects, spanning years. Some are rare pieces of unusual artistic are brilliant nonsense by diabolical playboys; are symptomatic of a cerebral rebellion against chaos, against straining conventions and which they produce. Art and chic, imagination, inventiveness, artificially induced paranoia anarchy keep such close company in some shock of their juxtaposition only magnifies the Dada itself. Can an "objective" whole possible from the *potpourri*, these fever charts of an whose only cure is the bitter medicine of opiates of a dream world? The public will condemn it as quackery and humbug, and fault will not be entirely with the public. It is a fault, of course, to reintegrate such convulsions so that the whole is not shouted by its parts. Had there been a more ruthless selectivity basis; a freer mingling of old and new "fantasy" at the risk of suggesting personally experienced or technical analogies; and had the museum command of the situation with useful ex similar to those that directed its visitors through Cubism show, this exhibition might have made contribution to the artistic education of its there is some clarity of intention on the first significantly hung rooms of unusual, imaginative tury material on the second, and increasing as we approach the top floor. The catalog bulletin are helpful Baedekers, the latter Dada and Surrealism by Georges Hugnet, documentation and illustrations of exhibits even in the former there are only vague clues for the inclusion of some of the more problem

THE ART NEWS

DECEMBER 12, 1936

Surrealism from 1450 to Dada & Dali

By Martha Davidson

THE Museum of Modern Art opens its doors to a public that is bound to be amused or outraged at the maelstrom which, in appalling abundance is presented for their inspection with careful indices but with little explanation of the curious inclusions in an exhibition that is called *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*. The visitor should be warned beforehand against the temptation of shutting the gate of one picture, or of pulling a watch case which houses a trout fly and which dangles from a breast of another. But, above all, he must be forewarned of the dangers of Duchamp's rotating machinery which, beneath Man Ray's lips in the sky, greets the visitor. For, according to Hugnet, it at one time threatened Man Ray with decapitation, and that is a serious award for curious contemplation.

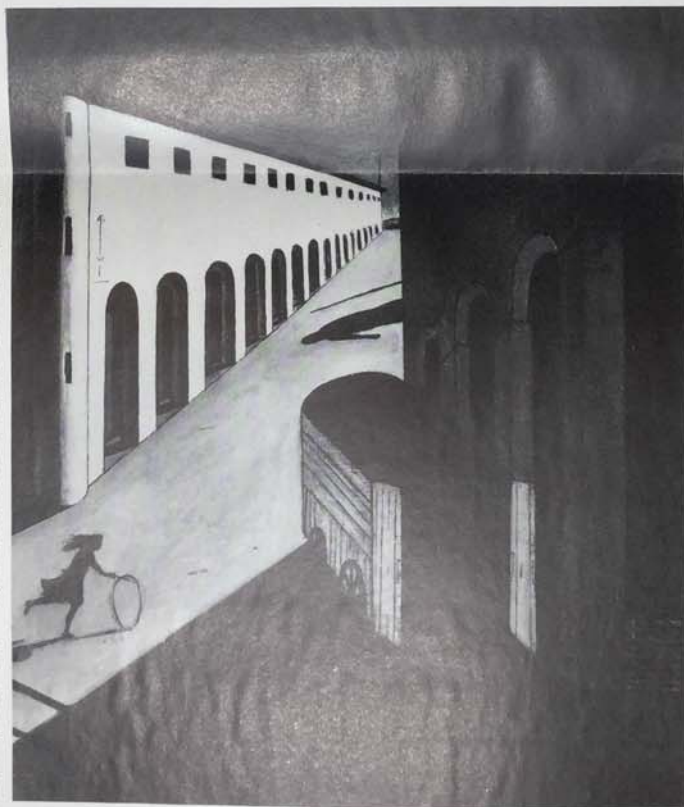
But it is too easy to scoff, too difficult to understand or to analyze, with smug reliance on the primacy of tradition. Alfred Barr, as Director of the Museum, in an "objective and historical manner" asserts that in offering "material for the study of one of the important and conspicuous movements of modern art . . . the Museum does not intend to set its stamp of approval upon a particular aspect of modern art." But such objectivity does not deter him from mentioning, "that Surrealism as an art movement is a serious affair and that for many it is more than an art movement; it is a philosophy, a way of life, a cause to which some of the most brilliant painters and poets of our age are giving themselves with consuming devotion."

There is perhaps a slight overstatement in the explanation, "The grouping of the illustrations in the book clarifies its intention and tells its story." In a passing mention of "certain obvious resemblances between some of the

works in the historical division and certain Dada and Surrealist works" a confusing element is revealed in the statement, "These resemblances, however startling, may prove to be superficial or merely technical in character rather than psychological. The study of the art in the past in the light of Surrealist esthetic is only just beginning. Genuine analogies may exist but they must be kept tentative until our knowledge of the states of mind of, say, Bosch or Bracelli has been increased by systematic research and comparison. One may suppose, however, that many of the fantastic and apparently Surrealist works of the Baroque and Renaissance (not to mention contemporary productions also included in the show) are to be explained on *rational* grounds rather than on a *Surrealist* basis of subconscious and irrational expression." Thus, within a one-page preface, is the key to the exhibition offered to the public.

It is well first to be forearmed with a clear understanding of the basic principles which underlie two post-war manifestations in the plastic arts: Dada and Surrealism. Dada, whose beginnings may be traced back to 1910, took crystallized shape in Zurich in 1916, during the war. It was a protest of a disillusioned generation against the destructive machinations of an ordered society. It met destruction with destruction. Order gave way to iconoclastic disorder; the negative character of accidental construction became the artistic goal in a curiously contradictory attempt to destroy the artistic ideal by means of a "systematic demoralization." Beauty was denied as well as creative individuality. Spontaneity and surprise, based frequently on deliberate ugliness were exalted above plastic qualities which they also denied.

This artistic revolution involved material as well as sub-



EXHIBITED AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
EARLY SURREALISM, DE CHIRICO'S "MELANCHOLY AND MYSTERY OF THE STREET"

Series Folder: 42	Collection: ACG	The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY
----------------------	--------------------	---------------------------------------

the inclusion of some of the more problematic objects and ment with many mongrel materials and techniques, and to

12

ject matter and technique. The *collage*, a development of Picasso's *papiers collés*, gave the Dadaists an opportunity to collect disconnected objects and combine them in startling representations. Hausmann's *Head* (1919) is composed of random pieces of newspaper pasted together in the suggestive shape of a head while Höch's *Collage* (1920) is a more complicated assemblage of pasted items. Animated objects by Ernst, with such anti-aesthetic titles as *1 copper plate 1 lead plate 1 rubber towel 2 key rings 1 drain pipe 1 tubular man* illustrate the "mechano-morphic" character of Dada so comparable in appearance to the seventeenth century etchings of Giovanni Bracelli. "Rayographs" by Man Ray and ready-made objects by Duchamp illustrate Dada's elevation of the accidental and of the commonplace as substitutes for works of art. *Collages* by Arp, which assume their color and shape by random cutting, also exalt the chance object. Coöperative effort by Ernst and Arp produced the *Fatagaga* (*fabrication de tableaux garantis gazométriques*), a series of collages. If Picabia's mechanical charts and Schwitters' collage, *Radiating World*, repulse the visitor they have achieved precisely what they set out to do. It was Schwitters who formulated Dada's aesthetic disgust in the terse remark, "all an artist spits is art." Such was the hysterical reaction to and escape



LENT BY MR. PHILIP HOFFER

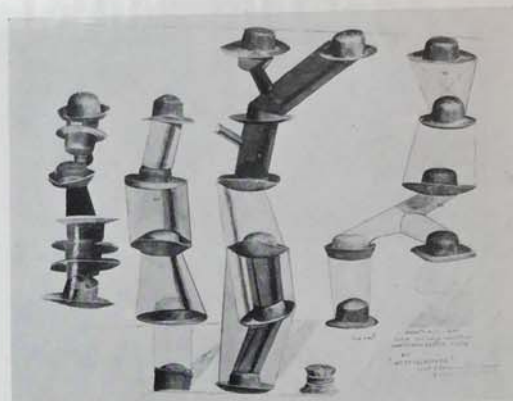
"THEY HAVE ALREADY RETAINED THEIR SEATS" BY GOYA

from the blood that was being spat by all the laws of society's logic.

While Dada, which rapidly began to die in 1920, based its revolution on negation and on the destruction of reason Surrealism under the direction of André Breton founded its movement in 1924 on the more positive basis of recreating a visual world governed by the illogical subconscious. In the first manifesto of Surrealism Breton marks its foundation: the union of two apparently contradictory states, dream and reality, into an *absolute reality* or *sur-reality*. Later he adds, "*nous voyons dans une telle contradiction la cause même du malheur de l'homme mais nous y voyons aussi la source de son mouvement*." The benefit of surrealism lies in "reconciling dialectically these two terms which are so violently contradictory for adult man: perception, representation; and in bridging the gap that separates them. . . . It tends to give ever greater freedom to instinctive impulses, and to break down the barrier raised before civilized man, a barrier which the primitive and the child ignore." This last sentence should be noted in reference to the related material included in the current exhibition.

Georges Hugnet, in his essay on Surrealism which accompanies

THE ART NEWS



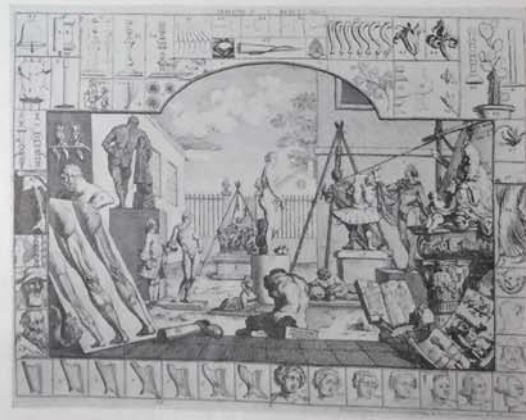
GIVEN ANONYMOUSLY TO THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

"THE HAT MAKES THE MAN" BY MAX ERNST, 1920, IN COLLAGE

the catalogue, discusses the Surrealist worship of the marvellous: "During the course of Surrealist development, outside all forms of idealism, outside the opiates of religion, the marvellous comes to light within *reality*. It comes to light in dreams, obsessions, preoccupations, in sleep, fear, love, chance; in hallucinations, pretended disorders, follies, ghostly apparitions, escape mechanisms and evasions; in fancies, idle wanderings, poetry, the supernatural and the unusual; in empiricism, in *superreality*. This element of the marvellous, relegated for so long to legends and children's fairy tales, reveals now in a true light, in a Surrealist light, the immanent reality and our relations to it."

Subjective expression aroused by a sort of self-mesmerism, gave rise to automatic writing, a spontaneous registration of the artist's subconscious impulses, of his uncontrolled thoughts. Such may be found among certain lyrical passages by Klee, Kandinsky, Masson, and Miro. *Collage* reached greater development in the composite illustrations for Ernst's *collage* novels. A new process called *frottage* was invented in which the surface design of a material was reproduced by rubbing. Composite irrational pictures also consumed the attention of the Surrealists and the "exquisite corpse" made its appearance ("experiments in collective drawing done in sections, the paper being covered or folded after each drawing and passed to the next artist so that he does not see what has already been drawn"). But it remained for Dali to introduce the baffling subjectivity of paranoia in objective descriptions of systemized delusion.

Surrealism, then, encompasses a great variety of techniques and preoccupations but its universal appeal is to the irrationality of the dream world. With this as a basis we can hurry over the twentieth century pioneers—Chirico, Kandinsky, Chagall, Klee, and Picasso.



LENT BY JAY LEYDA

FRONTISPIECE TO "THE ANALYSIS OF BEAUTY" BY HOGARTH

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection: ACh	Series/Folder: 42
---------------------------------------	-----------------	-------------------

1st January, 1937

entitled in the ranks of those who follow an outmoded fashion. Contemporary artists are famous for their little imitations of academic tricks and toys and think with satisfaction that they have done a good day's work in a world that craves new light and desperately needs real heroes, are but dancers at the wake.

"If you would go insane quite pleasantly and painlessly, let me recommend that you beg of one of the attendants a lump of 1921 sugar out of Mr. Duchamp's store-trap, drop it into Mr. Oppenheim's fur cup, stir well, and eat it down to disintegrate at the heart of Mr. Terry's *Evolution of the Waterfall*."

Miss Genuer of the *World Telegram* refused to be taken in, and sagely observed: "As a matter of fact, I am, regardless of the demands of daily life, a surrealist. I am a surrealist element in creative talent. Hardly a poet or painter or composer has lived who has not delved deep into the recesses of his imagination, tapped his inventive resources

Murford strikes at the Freudian suggestion. "The modern psychologists, the modern realists, have approached the normal by the way of the pathological. That follows inevitably from the fact that the willing, wishing, urging, passionate part of man's life has been slighted, stifled, and even banished altogether in favor of practical routine. Dismantling the imagination, we let it sneak back into life only in the guise of fancy dress or an even fancier disease—just as many of us never get a real opportunity for pleasurable idleness until we find ourselves on our backs in a hospital, recovering from the birth of a baby or an operation for appendicitis."

"But it would be absurd to dismiss surrealism as crazy. Maybe it is our civilization that is crazy. Has it not used all the powers of the rational intellect, all the disciplines of the practical will, to universalize the empire of numbers and machines? To turn whole states into Fascist nightmares? There is more here than meets the eye. Demons, for the modern man, are no less real than electrons; we see the shadow of both flitting across the screen of visible reality. Surrealism makes us conscious of this fact; it arranges the necessary apparatus. Before we can become sane again, we must remove the greatest of hallucinations—the belief that we are sane now."

DUBOIS ~ ALINE KISTLER ~ MARGARET BREUNING ~ HOWARD DEVREE

begin to explore consciously the labyrinths that connect the dream and waking life. The greater part of the exhibition has been given over to Dada and Surrealism; to artists like Dove, Blume, O'Keeffe, Calder, Disney, Thurber, and the California Post-Surrealists who are independent of these movements and yet related to them; and to such "comparative" material as children's art, the art of the insane, folk art, miscellaneous objects of quasi-Surrealistic content, commercial and journalistic art, and to photographs of capricious architecture and tortuous dream houses. The revolt of Dada, which was born in a Zurich café during the mad days of 1916 and died a political death in Berlin in 1920, brought some creative virtuosos to the fore: Ernst, Arp, Picabia, Duchamp, Man Ray, Grosz, among others. The researches of Surrealism, which received their official baptism with Breton's *Surrealist Manifesto* in 1924, continued to make converts outstanding among whom were Dali, Masson, and Miro. All sorts of anti-rational and irrational experiments were made systematically by both groups. Pieces of newspaper, wood, wallpaper, photographs, blotting paper, "readymades" picked up at random, sandpaper, cord, human hair, and other odds and ends were organized into collages and



"THE SNAIL," MODEL, BY EMILIO TERRY. LENT THE MUSEUM BY THE ARCHITECT, PARIS

"rubbish" arrangements. They took a sadistic pleasure in butting the backside of orthodoxy. It was a game, half serious and half playful. The contagion of Dada spread like an epidemic to Paris, Cologne, Hanover, Berlin, and New York. In Berlin the rebellion was most closely allied to actualities, and on the political front, to communism. By the early 'twenties most of the Dadaists were beginning to tire of their own buffoonery and to recognize the fruitlessness of their nihilism. Many of them later joined up with the Surrealists who had already begun their inquiries into the subconscious. The spontaneous, uninhibited expression differs widely with each personality, and despite what many of the spokesmen for the movement have written; collective, automatic, and chance productions have decided limitations as art, though they may be significant experimentally. Miro and Masson are more lyrical and less literary than that creative chameleon, Ernst; Arp's large simple forms have the attraction of bones bleached under a desert sun; Dali uses the objective world as a source book for concrete but fabricated erotic obsessions. The faith which most members of this group profess to have in Marxism has given the group a common social ideology which may some day make the contributions of this collective movement more vital as art. Some conception of the scope of this movement may be gained from the International Exhibition of Surrealism held in London during the past summer at which 392 items from fourteen countries, including the Canary Islands, were displayed. The theoreticians remind us again and again that Surrealism is not merely a style or school of painting or literature but "a latent state of mind" which combines the political faith of dialectical



must have become historical. The artists who ask us to believe that Dadaism is still alive and has a functioning role to play in the affairs of men and women here and now are merely

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42

The Art Digest

1st January, 1937

One Faint Bravo

THE CRITICAL COMMENT that greeted the great exhibition at the Modern Museum of Art—*Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism*—totalled enough columns of type to fill a good sized newspaper and ranged through complete exasperation to a faint "Bravo." For most of the critics the former mood prevailed.

Column headlines generally strike the keynote in the critics' opinion. "Farewell to Art's Greatness," read Henry McBride's in the *Sun*. "Fantasy in Perspective," headed Edward Alden Jewell's page in the *Times*. "Art Turned Into a Veritable Puzzle" featured Royal Cortissoz's *Herald Tribune* page. Emil Genuer's review in the *World-Telegram* (one of the most interesting) was captioned "Real Value of Dada and Surrealism Rests on Few Pictures." Lewis Mumford, the *New Yorker* critic gave the most favorable review and entitled it "Surrealism and Civilization," (after a Mumford predilection for "and Civilization"). "Art Goes Gaga," proclaimed Jerome Klein in the *Post*.

Said Cortissoz: "Back in 1913, when the memorable Armory Show was being put together—an affair for which one could not be too grateful—somebody had the bright idea of including a couple of drawings by Ingres, as though there were some sort of affinity between that Raphaellesque classicist and the painter of the *Nude Descending the Stairs*. It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that some such search after shadowy ancestral sanctions must have led to the appearance in the present exhibition of 'Fantastic Art' as it has manifested itself in the fifteenth and other centuries. But it is idle to invoke the great names of Leonardo and Dürer to validate the claims of the Surrealist. It is not by their obscurities that either of them is remembered, and as much may be said of later types, like Goya and Blake. All these, it is true, and painters such as Hieronymus Bosch, left some baffling problems behind them. Nay, one of the loveliest pictures in the world, Giorgione's *Tempest*, remains an enigma to this day. But the occasional painting of an enigma in the earlier periods of art does not necessarily justify the deliberate framing of enigmas in our own time. Not all the seeming precedents that exist can remove the modernist from his precarious footing on decidedly debatable ground."

Jewell's *Times* review found, in summation, mostly caprice. "Viewed as a staggering whole," he wrote, "this opulent circus at the Museum of Modern Art may be said to contain a great deal more artistry than art. After all, art must do more than thumb its wit at us and utter a cabalistic Fee-fi-fum. As a serious contribution, the show of the fantastic, the dadaistic and the surrealist is important alone because it is equipped to place on visual record movements in modern art that have become historical. The artists who ask us to believe that Dadaism is still alive and has a functioning role to play in the affairs of men and women here and now are merely

enlisted in the ranks of those who follow an outmoded fashion. Contemporary aspirants to fame who devise their little imitative, academic tricks and toys and think with satisfaction that they have done a good day's work in a world that craves new light and desperately needs real heroes, are but dancers at the wake.

"If you would go insane quite pleasantly and painlessly, let me recommend that you beg of one of the attendants a lump of 1921 sugar out of Mr. Duchamp's sneeze-trap, drop it into Mr. Oppenheim's fur cup, stir well, and then sit down to disintegrate at the hearth of Mr. Terry's fireplace With Waterfall."

Miss Genuer of the *World-Telegram* refused to be taken in, and sagely observed: "As a matter of fact, fantasy, regardless of the demands of subject, has always been an important element in creative talent. Hardly a poet or painter or composer has lived who has not delved deep into the recesses of his imagination, tapped his inventive resources, to uncover more fantastic and beautiful visions of places and things than are dreamed of in the average man's philosophy."

"To label such painters surrealists, however, is absurd. For surrealists live for their philosophy, and their pictures and sculptures and writings are only instruments whereby their ideas may be expressed. To the great painters they have magnanimously taken into their fold, however, fantasy was only grist for the mill of their art. The only important thing was to paint fine pictures."

Apologetic and expository was a long article by Lewis Mumford in the *New Yorker*. Taking up each of the ingredients of surrealism, Mumford arrives at the Freudian aspect. Thus Mumford: "Like the modern psychoanalysts, the surrealists have approached the normal by way of the pathological. That follows inevitably from the fact that the willing, wishing, urging, passionate part of man's life has been slighted, stifled, and even banished altogether in favor of practical routine. Distrusting the imagination, we let it sneak back into life only in the guise of fancy dress or an even fancier disease—just as many of us never get a real opportunity for pleasurable illness until we find ourselves on our backs in a hospital, recovering from the birth of a baby or an operation for appendicitis."

"But it would be absurd to dismiss surrealism as crazy. Maybe it is our civilization that is crazy. Has it not used all the powers of the rational intellect, all the hard discipline of the practical will, to universalize the empire of meaningless war and to turn whole states into Fascist madhouses? There is more here than meets the eye. Demons, for the modern man, are no less real than electrons; we see the shadow of both flitting across the screen of visible reality. Surrealism makes us conscious of this fact; it arranges the necessary apparatus. Before we can become sane again, we must remove the greatest of hallucinations—the belief that we are sane now."

national Exhibition of Surrealism held in London during the past summer at which 392 items from fourteen countries, including the Canary Islands, were displayed. The theoreticians remind us again and again that Surrealism is not merely a style or school of painting or literature but "a latent state of mind" which combines the political faith of dialectical



"CHARLES V.," 1533, BY AN UNKNOWN PAINTER. LENT BY LIPCHITZ TO THE MODERN MUSEUM

materialism with the artistic goal of bringing to light "the enormous illogical world in a more thorough and systematic manner." The inclusion in this show of fur-trimmed saucers, psychopathic drawings, and refuse-sculpture compounded of everything and anything from old shoes and rubber tubing,

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

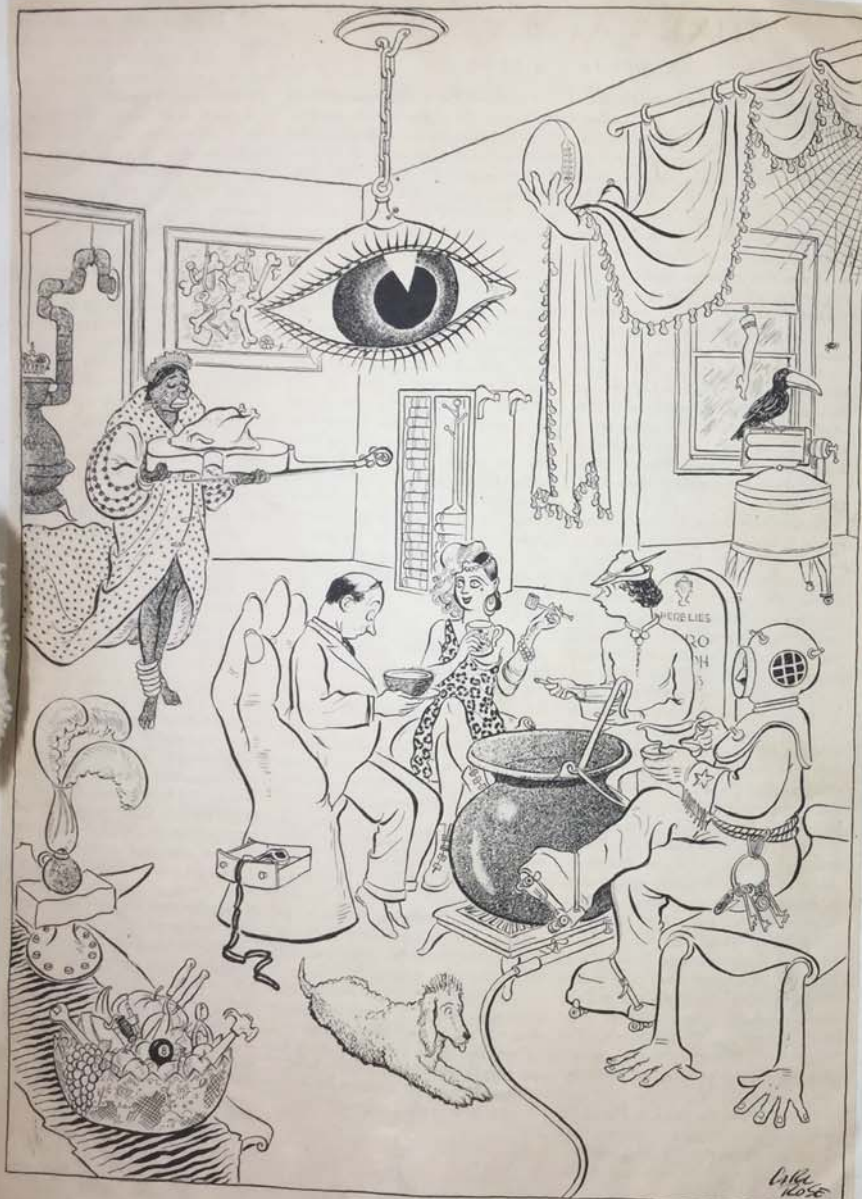
The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

ACG

Series.Folder:

42



A SURREALIST FAMILY HAS THE NEIGHBORS IN TO TEA

THE NEW YORKER

JANUARY 2, 1937



THE NEW YORKER

JANUARY 1, 1938

HONORS FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY

A Very Brief Listing of Some of Those Who Have Earned the Recognition of Their Countrymen During the Past Twelvemonth

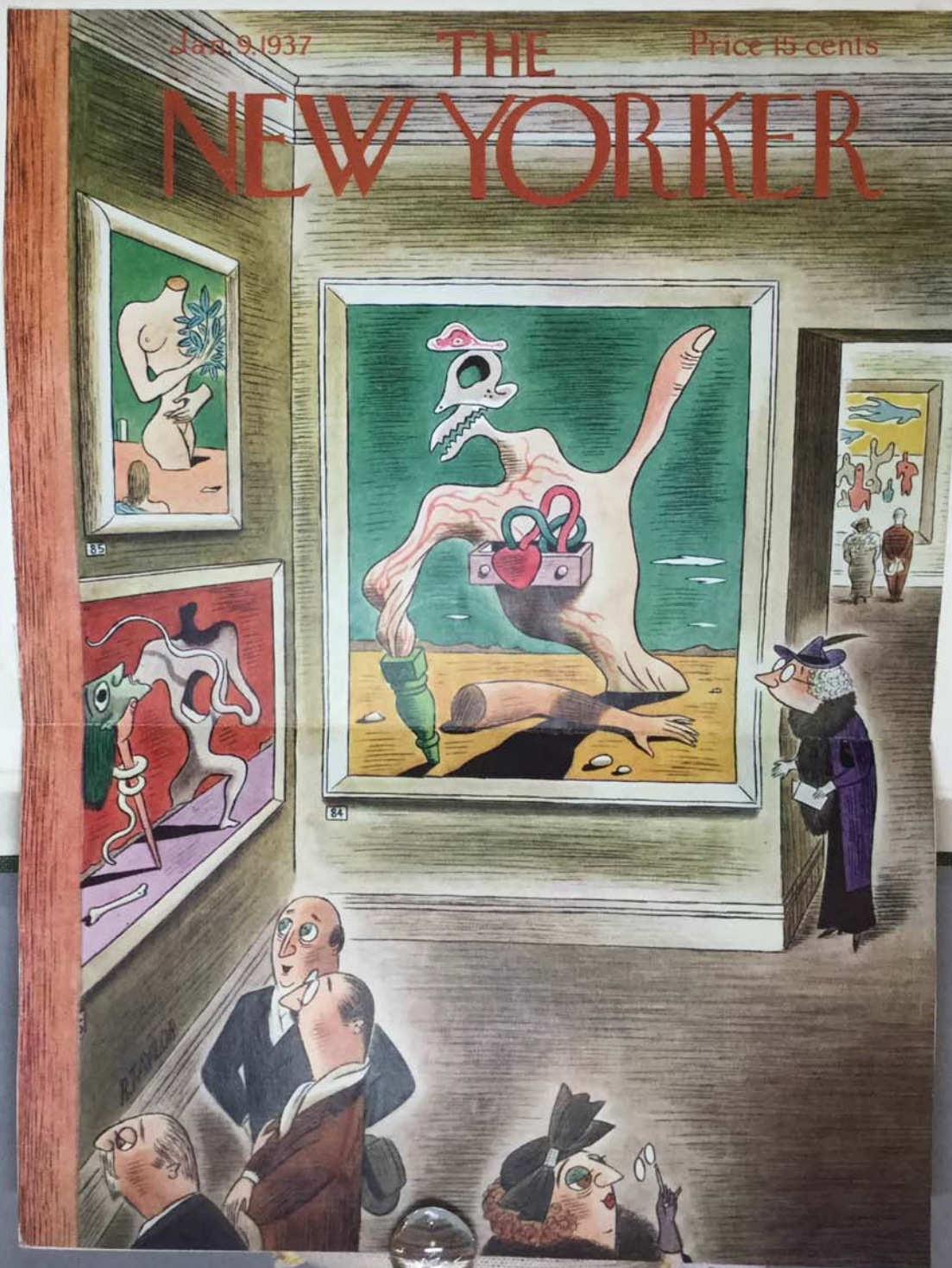


The New York surrealist artist who

withdrew her work from the show of the Museum of Modern Art when drawings by the insane were included.

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series Folder:
ACG		42



AS THE NEIGHBORS IN TO TEA



JANUARY 2, 1937

THE NEW YORKER

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY

Collection:

AC9

Series/Folder:

42

THE NEW YORKER

JANUARY 16, 1937

Surrealist Episode

THERE is a certain surrealist, fantastic, and Dada quality to the story of how Salvador Dali decorated his famous Bonwit Teller window. (This occurred weeks ago, but we only just heard about it.) A young couple we know happened to be at a very gay dinner party that included a Bonwit

Teller executive. Late, late in the evening, everybody decided to go over to the store and watch Dali at work. They found him and his wife knee-deep in teaspoons, whiskey glasses, and other unrelated objects. He immediately began sending everybody out on errands, for things he had forgotten to order. Our young couple were sent for a live lobster. They finally got one from the kitchen of the Place Elegante, and brought it, struggling indignantly, back to Bonwit Teller's. When he saw the lobster, Dali was indignant, too. "But," he said, in French, "it's not red." Somebody pointed out that you couldn't have a lobster alive and red at the same time, and Dali said grimly, "Well, I will. I'll paint it red." This aroused all the humanitarian feelings of our young matron, and she slipped out into the

street and hunted up a cop. "I have a cruelty-to-animals case for you," she said, crying tears of pure brandy. When she had explained what was going on, the cop just shook his head and told her that his hands were tied. "Lobsters ain't animals," he said. She went back indoors, determined to save the lobster herself, and found it already on the boil, down in the basement, where Bonwit Teller has a stove. Dali used the shell to drape over a telephone, and gave the claws to his assistants, who by this time were pretty hungry. That's all there is to the story, and now that it's finished, we really don't know why we told you. Bonwit Teller dismantled the window almost two weeks ago, the Modern Art show is about to close, and Manhattan Island, they say, is slowly sinking into the sea.

THE ART DIGEST

1st February, 1937

The Sham of It

SHILLA SKIDELSKY, art editor of the Washington Post and a critic who is thoroughly familiar with the European art world, indicts Surrealism as a dead product of Europe's post-war period and blames the Museum of Modern Art for perpetrating on the American public an artistic farce repudiated abroad. Miss Skidelsky in giving her funeral oration over the corpse of Surrealism and Dadaism says some things that will probably be repeated in the minds of thousands of Americans as the exhibition trends its way across the continent. Miss Skidelsky:

A wholesale exportation of out-dated sham humbuggery, for which there is no more use in Europe, has been forced on this indulgent-minded country. Why the Museum of Modern Art, which has always stood for all that is sound, rational and true in contemporary painting has lent its galleries to a hoax since long outlived and almost forgotten on the Continent, is very hard to understand. For it is too early yet to consider Dada and Surrealism in the light of historical documents on a sick post-war world. Smothered ashes flicker yet, and flames can spring on this new fresh soil, thus reviving a philosophy and an idea which have brought nothing but destructive elements and empty phraseology to mankind.

Let not America delude itself. That movement is absolutely finished in the lands of its origin. We hardly ever hear of it, except with mockery. France is painting in utter normalcy, not academism of course, (that, too, is finished), but ample and constructed painting, without guesswork or fraud, "real painting," in one word, and not clowning with forms and colors.

Knowing that their little day is done, as far as Europe is concerned, those sham artists, whose commercial ability has always been very developed, try to transport their discrepancies to more propitious shores.

The Art Digest

1st February, 1937

THE FORTNIGHT IN NEW YORK

As Reported by Paul Bird

The Modern Museum's Surrealist exhibition has quietly closed and the expressman has already nimbly placed the founding, 85% intact, on the doorstep of the Pennsylvania Museum. There it will stay to March 1st, perhaps reminding Philadelphians of the aftermath of a Mummer's parade. No one should miss this exciting exhibition so here is the itinerary for out-of-towners: Boston Museum, March 6-April 3; Springfield (Mass.) Museum, April 12-May 10; Milwaukee Institute of Art, May 19-June 16; San Francisco Museum of Fine Art, Aug. 2-30. July is still open. At the close of the New York showing the press received a release from Miss Katherine Dreier's publicity agent explaining Miss Dreier's indignant withdrawal of her paintings from the show (see page 12). Commenting editorially, the *Times* said: "It is all very puzzling indeed. Why does Miss Dreier merely like the work of painters who pretend to be insane and become indignant when she sees the real thing?"

The other things that will be left out of the exhibition are unimportant and the Modern Museum assures (this department that such items as the far-lined tea cup will certainly be included).

* * *

Only the Museum of Modern Art is evidently not aware that while it presents this huge absurdity to America in the light of a recent historical document, it in reality helps an outlived and now shunned movement to outlive and to perpetuate itself and to survive, transplanted to another country. In 50 years this show would be interesting. As yet, it is only a farce.

The sham schools have always been famous for their ingenious salesmanship. . . . The same salesmanship is going to be used here which so humiliateingly succeeded in Europe.

This is why, in presenting a Dada and Surrealist show, the Museum of Modern Art does not serve the higher purposes of contemporary painting.

As after the Napoleonic wars, the "mal du siècle" emerged, and through it a literary, philosophical and artistic renovation, during and after the great war, when the whole world got sick, Dada was born. What exactly is Dada? George Hugnet has called it "the sickness of the world" itself. It is wholly negative. It destroys without reconstructing. . . .

The very accidental manner in which the word "Dada" came out confirms the ballyhoo of this now terminated theory. In 1915, right during the war, Arp, Van Rees and Mrs. Van Rees were together in Zurich at the cabaret Voltaire hanging their works with those of Picasso, Segal, Janco, Marinetti, Eggeling. On February 8, 1916, one of them stuck a paper-knife into a dictionary and cut out a name at random: "Dada" was founded.

Dada fought with Cubism and Futurism—yet Dada never knew what it fought for.

THE NEW YORKER

FEBRUARY 6, 1937

Our surrealists are offended because the Museum of Modern Art exhibited their work along with that of psychopaths. Only sane painters, they say, should be allowed to act goofy in public places.

—HOWARD BRUBAKER

The names of the Dada artists are now never heard of in France. Some of them are even unfamiliar. Arp, Tzara, Kandinsky, van Hoeslin, Ponge, Cendrars, Janco, Slodky, zenbeck, Hugo, Oelze Miro, Baargeld, Huel, is preoccupied with them?

Then, suddenly, Dada came to an end. As all epidemics, even plague, have to terminate and faded out. Dissensions arose between people who did not know what they wanted. A play by Tzara "le coeur a gas" augmented the confusion. The public grew tired of pranks which were not even funny. Breton managed to extract from the expiring "cercueil" a nucleus of ex-dadaists joined by some fresh forces.

In 1924, a group of Surrealists, left-overs of Dadaism, issued the "Premier Manifeste du Surrealisme."

This new period (during the 1920's) built around Picasso (affiliated to Surrealism but never entirely belonging to it), Max Ernst, Duchamp, de Chirico, and others was based on research of the subconscious and of hypnotic sleep.

The movement vegetated aimlessly, sustained by literary periodicals, such as "La Revolution Surrealiste," "Le Surrealisme au Service de la Revolution," and would have been buried and forgotten everywhere ages ago if not for the powerful personality of Salvador Dali, who has given to a cause lost in advance the support of his young strong faith, the vigor of his draughtsmanship, the dazzling brilliance of his pallet. Even with that, in Europe, no one has any use for Surrealism, except designers of clothes who can, as Schiaparelli did after the London Exhibition, utilize some of

the Surrealists' practical jokes in details of pockets or of belts. Otherwise no European critic would devote a serious line of writing to Surrealism considered as an art. So the able salesmen of Surrealism decided to try out if America would be more gullible than the old world—and the result is an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. . . .

Charlatanism has been consecrated in one of the most progressive and most enlightened organizations of this country: the Museum of Modern Art. But the critical press, usually so timid, has not fallen for this sort of fallacy. This time, all of the New York art critics have vetoed the exhibition.

Not very openly nor ostentatiously, it is true, and always finding "something good to say," one way or the other, so as not to make enemies, and smoothing the acuteness of the condemnation by some laudatory remarks about sidelines.

Art criticism, which used to be one of great professions of literature, has dwindled down to nothingness because of a few people's mistakes regarding the early modernists, Gauguin, Cézanne, Van Gogh. Afraid of making another similar mistake, contemporary art critics have brought the profession down to mere descriptive reports, and not even good reporting. There is nothing creative left about it at all, no ideas, no intellectuality. We are a herd of sheep following each other and afraid of any commitment.

A reaction must logically take place soon, and the more decided stand of American critical opinion against exportation of out-dated post-war movements gives us some hope for the regeneration of our profession. Let this huge bluff show be its funeral shroud.

1st March, 1937

Not to Snicker

The centenary exhibition of Winslow Homer paintings attracted the largest attendance in the Whitney Museum. This was particularly gratifying to Thomas Craven, writing in the *New York American*, "since the exhibition had to compete with a notorious affair of a totally different stamp—the Surrealist side-show staged by the cultured showmen of the Museum of Modern Art."

If the attendance at the Homer exhibi-

tion has any bearing on the current situation," says Mr. Craven, "it may be said to indicate that the American people, though susceptible, as heretofore, to the lure of stunts, jokes, and deformities, are capable of appreciating the best in art."

"They go in droves to the Surrealist pot-works to be amused and to snicker at monstrosities of frivolous ingenuity; they flock in equal number to Winslow Homer to be moved by the vigorous and dramatic expressions of a profoundly serious mind."

Knock, Knock!

HYSTERIA sometimes breeds war, suicide or murder; more often its offspring is a tale, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. William Randolph Hearst, in his red-baiting campaign, could take lessons from the Defenders of Democracy, who have indicted surrealism as "a move by international communists in their war on standards in religion, industry, society and the arts." A committee of five artists, according to the *New York Herald Tribune*, brought in the verdict.

Surrealism is excoriated by the artist committee of the Defenders as further evidence of the "crafty, indirect methods of the international communists." Communist activity, say the committee members, "has given rise to poetry reduced to jargon; music to jangling discord; the dance to calculated ugliness and all other forms of art expression to the hideous, the discordant, or the ludicrous."

Miss Content Johnson, portrait painter and head of the committee, adds that surrealism in art is a fitting parallel to the atheistic campaigns of communists in the field of religion and asserts "it is only logical to them that all forces which elevate the human mind must be nullified." The Defenders of Democracy, through Louis M. Bailey, national director, put the stamp of approval on the opinions of the committee. He said that there were 60,000 members in his organization and that it was nation-wide and non-political, despite the fact that it actively opposed the re-election of President Roosevelt with a group of surrealist-like murals at 50¢ a look.

And so surrealism, born of unknown parents in post-war Paris and lately brought to this country for decent burial, must make atonement for yet another sin. Maybe that far-lined cup was designed for vodka.

1st March, 1937

FOR STUDY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR REPRODUCTION.

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	ACG	42

SOUTHERN LUMBERMAN

*

A complaint was filed at the Museum of Modern Art because the work of some lunatics was displayed with that of the surrealists. And, strangely enough, it wasn't the lunatics who complained.

*



The Boston Museum of Modern Art

requests the honor of your company
at a private view of an exhibit of

**Fantastic Art
Dada
Surrealism**

at nine o'clock Wednesday evening

March 10

14 Newbury Street, Boston

*The exhibition will be open to the public from
March 11 through April 3. It will be necessary
for Museum Subscribers always to present their
membership cards when visiting the exhibition.*

