



Title: from *Les Chants de Maldoror Series (The Songs of Sadness)*
 Artist: Salvador Dalí (1904 – 1989)
 Date: 1934
 Dimensions: 18 1/8 x 13 1/2 (framed); 12 1/8 x 7 3/4 (image)
 Medium: Etching
 Acquisition #: 2000.5.132
 Additional Works by the Artist: Yes ___ NO_X_



Artist's Biography

Born May 11th, 1904 in Figueras, Spain, Salvador Dalí started as an art student in Barcelona and Madrid. Dalí didn't find his unusual artistic style for which he would become known until the 1920's with the influence of the original psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud, and the Surrealists in Paris. Dalí's most popular works were those that explored the subconscious and the ideas brought about by Freud's research. Dalí died in Spain on January 23rd, 1989 at the age of 84.

Surrealism

Originally a literary movement that started in the late 1910's and early 1920's, this intellectual and political movement experimented with a new form of expression called automatism. The movement was centered in Paris and officially established when the poet André Breton published the *Manifesto of Surrealism* in 1924. Surrealism's ideals were influenced heavily by the psychological theories of Sigmund Freud and the political ideas of Karl Marx. The movement spread into the visual arts with artists like René Magritte and Salvador Dalí who would explore hallucinatory images and Freudian symbols within their art. Breton in the Second Manifesto of Surrealism praised Dalí and they both became main collaborators for *Minotaure*, a Surrealist-oriented publication in Paris.

Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud, an Austrian neurologist who lived from 1856 to 1939, is the founder of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is a clinical method for treating psychopathology through dialogue between a patient and a psychoanalyst. Freud utilized therapeutic techniques that he developed himself to delve into unconscious conflicts. His techniques were based on free associations, dreams, and fantasies of the patient. His theories on child sexuality, libido, and the ego were some of the most influential concepts of the twentieth century.

Dali and Vermeer

From a young age Salvador Dalí was fascinated by the work of the Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer (1632 to 1675). His interest began with a reproduction of the painting *The Lacemaker* that hung in his father's office and he became obsessed with the painting, even releasing his own reproduction of the work in 1955. Dalí also included the painting briefly in the film, *Un Chien Andalou*. Dalí's infatuation with Vermeer expanded to Dalí painting the artist himself within the abstract and surrealist painting titled *The Ghost of Vermeer van Delft Which Can Be Used as a Table*. Dalí was known to repeat figures with varying abstractness. We see this in *The Ghost of Vermeer van Delft Which Can Be Used as a Table* with the figure of the artist and also in *The Persistence of Memory* where we can see an abstracted form of Dalí's own self-portrait, according to interpretations by several critics.

Les Chants de Maldoror (The Songs of Sadness)

Les Chants de Maldoror is a French poetic novel from 1869. Salvador Dalí was invited to illustrate the novel in the 1930s as it was rediscovered by the Surrealists of the time. Dalí used a process of stream-of-consciousness to achieve hallucinations and delusions. These personal visions became the focus of his illustrations instead of the imagery induced by the novel. The individual prints made by Dalí were etching experiments never published as separate print editions.



The Ghost of Vermeer van Delft Which can be Used as a Table by Salvador Dalí, 1934, oil paint, 9" x 7"



The Lacemaker (After Vermeer) by Salvador Dalí, 1955, Oil paint, 9 3/4" x 7 3/4"



The Lacemaker by Johannes Vermeer, 1670, Oil paint, 9" x 8"

“Those who do not want to imitate anything, produce nothing.” – Salvador Dalí

Influences for Songs of Sadness Series

Although various influences affected Dalí's *Songs of Sadness*, the forms used for this etching (top) bear strong similarities to his portrayal of Johannes Vermeer in *The Ghost of Vermeer van Delft Which Can Be Used as a Table* (above) which is in the Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida.

References

<https://www.biography.com/people/sigmund-freud-9302400>
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Salvador-Dali>
<https://www.britannica.com/art/Surrealism>
<https://www.moma.org/collection/works/23590>
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-surreal-world-of-salvador-dali-78993324/>

Completed Summer 2018 by Michael A. Avila

Surrealist Portraits: Activity Lesson Plan K – 5

Session Activity: The Surrealist artists experimented with the idea of the portrait. They would often obscure portraits with symbolism and imagery from their dreams and from research within psychoanalysis. In the etching from the *Songs of Sadness* by Dali, we see Dali's process for obscuring the portrait of Johannes Vermeer into an abstracted bone-like structure. We can see the way Dali affected his peers, such as René Magritte and the other Surrealist artists. The students will create self-portraits while exploring the imagery of their dreams and imaginations and try to apply them to their art work. The students will be asked to recall recent pleasant dreams or use their imaginations to create dream-like ideas that can be included in their self-portraits.

Objective: The students will experience the process of the surrealist artists by trying to tap into their own unconscious brains or imaginations and form imagery that describes themselves. They will form surrealist self-portraits in the style of Magritte and then present their portraits to the class to explain the surreal imagery they included and the meaning of the imagery.

Big Idea VA.3.S: Skills, Techniques, and Processes
Enduring Understanding 1 VA.3.S.1: The arts are inherently experiential and actively engage learners in the processes of creating, interpreting, and responding to art.
VA.3.S.1.3 Incorporate ideas from art exemplars for specified time periods and cultures.

Material: blank paper, pencils, coloring materials (crayons, colored pencils, paint)

Activity Procedures:

1. Show the students the etching from the *Songs of Sadness* and *The Persistence of Memory* by Dali. Show the students *Son of Man* by Magritte and other self-portraits by surrealist artists. Discuss the similarities and differences between the works and the way surrealist artists made their self-portraits unique.
2. Discuss dreams and the unconscious mind with students and the way Dali and the Surrealist artists would apply dreams and imagination to their artwork.
3. Have students recall pleasant dreams or use their imaginations to describe the imagery of those dreams or imaginary scenes they like.
4. On a blank sheet of paper, have the students draw, in color, their pleasant dreams, or imaginary scenes. Tell them to include themselves in the dreams or scenes.
5. Have each student present their self-portraits and explain the imagery.

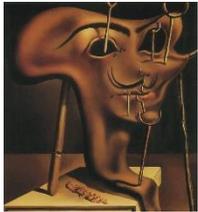
Completed Summer 2018 by Michael A. Avila



Son of Man, René Magritte, 1964, Painting, 45 6/10" x 35"



The Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dali, 1931, Painting, 9" x 13"



Soft Self-Portrait with Grilled Bacon, Salvador Dali, 1941, Painting, 24" x 20"

Surrealist Portraits: Activity Lesson Plan 6 – 12

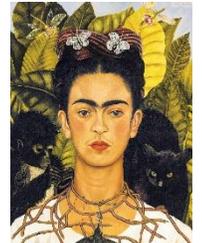
Session Activity: The Surrealist artists experimented with the idea of the portrait. They would often obscure portraits with symbolism and imagery from their dreams as well as from research within psychoanalysis. In the etching from the *Songs of Sadness* by Dali, we see Dali's process for obscuring the portrait of Johannes Vermeer into an abstracted bone-like structure. The students will create self-portraits while exploring the imagery of their dreams and imaginations and try to apply them to their art work. The students will be asked to recall recent dreams or use their imaginations to create dream-like ideas that can be included in their self-portraits.

Objective: The students will experience the process of the surrealist artists by trying to tap into their own unconscious brains or imaginations and form imagery that describes themselves. They will form surrealist self-portraits in the style of Dali and then present their portraits to the class to explain the surreal imagery they included and the meaning of the imagery.

Material: blank paper, pencils, coloring materials (crayons, colored pencils, paint), canvas, paint

Activity Procedures:

1. Show the students the etching from the *Songs of Sadness* as well as *The Ghost of Vermeer Van Delft Which Can Be Used as a Table* by Dali and other self-portraits by Surrealist artists, such as Magritte, Kahlo, and Miro. Discuss the similarities and differences between the works and the way Surrealist artists made their self-portraits unique.
2. Discuss dreams and the unconscious mind with students and the way Dali and the Surrealist artists would apply dreams and imagination to their artwork.
3. Have students recall dreams or use their imaginations to describe imagery from those dreams, or imaginary scenes that they like.
4. Have the students sketch self-portraits in color and have them include imagery that is inspired by imagination or dreams.
5. Have students transfer their imagery from sketches to completed paintings on canvas. Tell them to consider expanding their ideas and imagery as they move from sketches to paintings.
6. Have each student write a short paper explaining the imagery used in their self-portraits and have them compare the way they used their imagery to the way Dali and other surrealist artists obscured their portraits. Ask questions to help them analyze the imagery they chose to use, such as: How did the imagery change from sketch to painting? What was communicated using surrealistic imagery? Did the imagery become more realistic or more obscured when moving from sketch to painting?
7. Have each student present his/her self-portrait and explain the imagery and how it relates to surrealist ideals.



Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird, Frida Kahlo, 1940, Painting, 19" x 24"



Salvador Dali, Photograph

Big Idea VA.912.S: Skills, Techniques, and Processes
Enduring Understanding 2 VA.912.S.2 : Development of skills, techniques, and processes in the arts strengthens our ability to remember, focus on, process, and sequence information.
VA.912.S.2.6 Incorporate skills, concepts, and media to create images from ideation to resolution.