

SURREALISM: DREAMS AND IMAGERY



ON EXHIBITION:

- NEW YORK – NOVEMBER 3-8
- PARIS – NOVEMBER 14-15
- MADRID – NOVEMBER 20-21

SALE TO BE HELD AT SOTHEBY'S LONDON DECEMBER 4, 2000

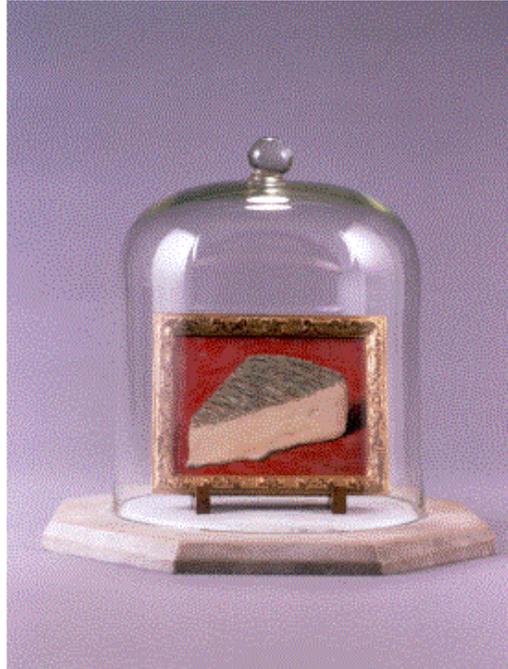
SOTHEBY'S first ever sale devoted to Surrealism will be held in London on the evening of December 4, 2000. Surrealism: Dreams and Imagery, includes many important works by the leading Surrealist artists such as Dalí, Magritte, Tanguy, Ernst, Man Ray, Duchamp, Delvaux, Picasso, Miró and Tàpies. Highlights from the 64-lot sale will be exhibited in New York, Paris and Madrid prior to the sale in London which is expected to make in the region of £12 million (\$18 million).

Surrealism was developed by a small group of innovative artists, writers and poets in the 1920s and 1930s, whose aim was to create art according to the irrational dictates of their subconscious mind and vision. This produced subject matter of pure fantasy, and an intensive exploration of the world of dreams.

In 1924, André Breton formally announced Surrealism as a movement, proclaiming: 'Si vous aimez l'amour, vous aimerez le Surréalisme', ('If you like love, you will love Surrealism'). The movement matured in Paris around a group of international artists and writers led by André Breton, who organised themselves into a formal movement, wrote manifestos and met regularly. Their art was shown in Paris, London, Tenerife, Amsterdam, Prague, Tokyo and Mexico under the title: 'International Exhibition of Surrealism'. They believed strongly in the homogenous character of the group, with some of the artists considering themselves performance pieces and part of the artwork they were producing. The Surrealist movement has had a far reaching impact and continued to inspire many artists of the 20th Century, as is illustrated in this sale which is a celebration of the spirit of the surreal.

One of the highlights of this auction is Salvador Dalí's *Ma femme nue regardant son propre corps devenir marches, trois vertèbres d'une colonne, ciel et architecture* (My wife, naked, watching her own body becoming steps, three vertebrae of a column, sky and architecture). The work, pictured above, is one of the most important paintings by Dalí to be sold at auction since Sotheby's sold his *Cygnés reflétant des éléphants* in New York in May 1995 for \$3.5 million. Painted in New York in 1945, the work is a finely painted nude portrait of his wife Gala, seen from behind in a

barren landscape. Dalí said of Gala: “She is the rarest being to see, the superstar.....At Salvador Dalí’s home, there are two prime ministers; one is my wife Gala, and the other is Salvador Dalí. Salvador Dalí and Gala are the two unique beings capable of mathematically moderating and exalting my divine madness.” The oil on panel is estimated at £2.75-3.5 million / \$4-5 million.



The sale also features a group of works by Magritte, including *Ceci est un morceau de fromage*, (left) a gilt-framed oil painting of a piece of cheese presented on an easel and resting on a cheese platter covered with a glass dome. The work was acquired directly from the artist by the family of the present owner (estimate: £150,000-225,000). Also by Magritte is a lyrical and witty painting, *Souvenir de voyage of the Leaning Tower of Pisa being propped up by a feather*. It is estimated at £400,000-600,000 / \$600,000-900,000.

Another Belgian Surrealist, Paul Delvaux, is represented by one of his major compositions *Le Bois sacré* of 1946. It depicts an imaginary garden of earthly delights and is estimated at £1.5-2 million / \$2.25-3 million.

Surrealism provided Picasso with new imagery and an artistic vocabulary to express his relationship with Marie-Thérèse Walter while camouflaging their passionate affair from his wife, Olga. *Femme fleur* (Marie-Thérèse Alongée) of 1931, demonstrates how Picasso took Surrealism to its extreme and used it to reflect the turmoil and passion of his personal life. It is estimated at £1.5-2 million / \$2.25-3 million.

Among works by Tanguy are classic imaginary landscapes of biomorphic forms painted in 1937 and 1943 (estimate: £200,000-300,000 / \$300,000-450,000 and £300,000-400,000 / \$450,000-600,000).

One of Man Ray’s most famous photographs entitled *Erotique voilée*, of 1933, depicts the celebrated artist Meret Oppenheim, best known for the fur-covered cup and saucer. It is a great rarity and widely considered to be an icon of Surrealism and shows Oppenheim naked, her forearm covered in black ink, standing behind a large printing press. It is estimated at £80,000-120,000 / \$120,000-180,000.

Among the post-war artists represented in the sale are two major works by Antoni Tàpies including *La Gran Paraula* (The great world) of 1951 estimated at £140,000-200,000.

Max Ernst’s *I saw a Grand Duchess who lost her Shoe* or *La Fuite* signed and dated 40, is an oil painted at the pinnacle of the artist’s career. It depicts his companion of the time, Leonora Carrington, as if fleeing from the war that was about to engulf them. It is estimated at £500,000-700,000 / \$750,000-1,050,000.

THE PRESS WALK-THROUGH FOR THE SALE WILL BE HELD AT 34-35 NEW BOND STREET ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2000 AT 10AM.

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