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REGARDING STRATEGIES:
SALVADOR DALÍ, MODERNISM AND PARANOID VISION

by

Angela G. Glass

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

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Adviser: Jack Flam

By my dissertation title, *Regarding Strategies: Salvador Dalí, Modernism and Paranoid Vision*, I mean to imply a reconsideration of the strategies of seeing, the historical politics of looking, the aesthetics of regard and disregard vis-á-vis Salvador Dalí. To do this, I look at some of the fundamental arguments and assumptions of the discursive traditions of modernism, I identify Dalí's early formal, iconographic and structural borrowings from other artists, and I explore alternately the subject as visual agent and visuality as object of critical inquiry.

In Chapter One, "Introduction: Dalí, Painting and Its Tradition," I trace and re-articulate some of the discursive determinations of the history of modern art. My aim here is to examine Dalí's oeuvre within the context of art history, a history with which he has had a combatively ambivalent relationship. In Chapter Two, "Regarding Strategies," I describe the evolution of Dalí's paranoid-critical method and significant commentary about it. I also look at the relationship between Dalí's art production and the work of Georges Bataille, André Breton, and Jacques Lacan. Although by no means a flawless strategy, Dalí's exploitation of paranoia confirms his fascination with the territory between interpretation and authorship, reality and fiction, and the structures of organization and production. In Chapter Three, "Regarding Dalí's Paintings," I look at the paintings themselves in light of the groundwork laid in the first two chapters. In Chapter Four,

"Conclusion: From the Optical Unconscious to the (Self)Conscious Optic," I explore Dalí's marginalization from mainstream modernism and his relevance to postmodern art practices.

To consider Dalí's art in the context of surrealism is to witness his critical engagement with major currents of modernist thought. He merits our attention because his persona and vision are so symptomatic of our times. Dalí crystallizes the paranoiac circumstances pervasive in our society and confirms our suspicion that what we see is colored by a mixture of experience, memory, conjecture and imagination. His best paintings capture the texture of quotidian reality by communicating both its precious order and terrible uncertainty. Moreover, they assure us that a canny approach to visual representation has a long history.

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I have had the privilege of being taught to look at and write about art by some of the best scholars in the field of art history. First among my teachers is Rosalind Krauss, who was my original advisor on this project, and the person who suggested to me that I make Salvador Dalí the focus of my study. Her work has been my most constant interlocutor in conceiving and carrying out this project. I have also been fortunate in having Jack Flam as my dissertation advisor at The Graduate Center of The City University of New York. His understanding of the history of modern art, thoughtful challenges to my thinking, and editing skills greatly improved the final version of this dissertation. For her careful reading of this text, suggested revisions, and congenial guidance, I thank Diane Kelder. I am also grateful to Mary Ann Caws for her enthusiastic and consistent participation in this project.

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Chapter One

Introduction:
Dalí, Painting and Its Tradition

i.

What did Salvador Dalí accomplish when he and his friend Luis Buñuel took a scalpel to a woman's eye in their film, *Un Chien Andalou* [Fig. 1]. In *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*, Martin Jay claims this fascinating scene in the 1928 film "has special significance for the surrealist contribution to the crisis of ocularcentrism."[1] As stated here, removed from its context, Jay's adroit claim belies its significance and intrinsic complexity. The surgical incision and the allegorical complement of that dramatization—the sliver of cloud bisecting the lunar eye—bring together elements of form, structure and iconography that Dalí would repeatedly draw upon. This scene connects to Dalí's enthusiasm between 1927 and 1939 (the years I will refer to as his surrealist period) for representations that associate vision with ambivalence, confusion, and even violence. Dalí's representational choices confirm and contribute to the philosophical shift conditioned by the denigration of vision, that occurs in France in the 1920s.

In this dissertation I trace Dalí's fascination with and exploitation of

perspective—visual, representational and psychological. Dalí's surrealist art links vision and desire, and makes us aware of visuality as a construction, which depends on conventions. I claim his surrealist art crystallized a mood of paranoia and powerlessness that is symptomatic of contemporary history. In his best paintings, the only certainty is that what we see is conditioned by our experience, memory, conjecture and imagination.

Much has been written about Dalí's representational goals by scholars who have tended to focus on his extensive auto-biographical and theoretical texts.[2] Certainly Dalí's writings deserve consideration, but for the purposes of art history they are secondary to his visual art production. While I refer to Dalí's texts and propose biographical sources for some of his iconography, my dissertation depends on an inventory and analysis of his representational strategies.[3] This contextualized inventory is brought to bear on Dalí's artistic trajectories and aims. To accomplish this, I consider his overt references to art history and to his contemporaries, including Picasso; the purists, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) and Amédée Ozenfant; and Giorgio de Chirico.

The paintings from Dalí's surrealist period elicit widespread critical perplexity. Part of the confusion stems from the fact that for all the novelty of Dalí's forms, percolating through them were ideas sketched out and elaborated by others. Since the modern painters who influenced Dalí were, in turn, influenced by other artists, my method sets up a situational mîse-en-

abyme. This is inevitable and fitting because Dalí aimed to locate the forms in his paintings in a hall of mirrors where they are indistinguishable as real or reflective, original or representational.

Soon after his first one-man show in Paris, Dalí became known there and in New York as the quintessential surrealist artist. Some argue that he sacrificed authenticity for fame; others interpret his inauthenticity as an art-making strategy. Whatever the reason, he was doubly marginalized—from the surrealist movement and from the modernist canon. My goal is to re-articulate the contribution that Dalí made to surrealism and to the history of modern art and to substantiate the re-emergence of Dalí in late twentieth and twenty-first-century art.

As my title—*Regarding Strategies: Salvador Dalí, Modernism and Paranoid Vision*—implies, I aim to reconsider the modernist strategies of seeing, the historical politics of looking, the aesthetics of regard and disregard vis-á-vis Dalí. To do this, I look at some of the fundamental arguments and assumptions of the discursive traditions of modernism, I identify Dalí's early formal, iconographic and structural borrowings from other artists, and I explore alternately the subject as visual agent and visuality as object of critical inquiry. To begin, I trace and re-articulate some of the discursive determinations of the history of modern art, which I will use to shed light on Dalí's art production. My aim here is to examine Dalí's oeuvre within the context of art history, a history with which he has had a

combatively ambivalent relationship. In the second chapter, I describe the evolution of Dalí's paranoid-critical method and significant commentary about it. Although his exploitation of paranoia was by no means a flawless strategy, it confirms Dalí's fascination with the territory between interpretation and authorship, reality and fiction, and the structures of organization and production. In the third chapter, I look at Dalí's paintings themselves in light of the groundwork laid in the first two chapters. In the last chapter, I consider Dalí's marginalization from mainstream modernism and his relevance to postmodern art practices.

Although this dissertation does not provide an historical narrative of Dalí's entire oeuvre, I do note some of the highs and lows of his art practice after 1939. In his later years, his work in diverse media became increasingly grandiose and single-minded. In this regard, my conclusion concurs with what other Dalí scholars and critics have claimed: there is a marked decline in the quality of his paintings after he left the surrealist circle. The inconsistent quality and new direction of Dalí's post-1939 art production, his eccentric public persona, and his failure to endorse the avant-garde's preferred political positions and aesthetics contributed to devaluation of his entire oeuvre.

ii.

During the last twenty-five years, the assumptions, arguments and modes of interpretation that comprise the visual tradition have become a familiar theme in art history departments and in a wide-range of disciplines in the humanities, including French, English, history, philosophy, psychology, film and women's studies. Postmodernism's interest in appropriation, simulation, and its critique of the sexual in the visual have set the stage for a revitalization of Dalí's reputation. Moreover, current interest in the concepts of *vision* and *visuality* can help to shed light on Dalí's paranoiad-critical method. I use the terms *vision and visuality* advisedly, however, because as Hal Foster warned:

> Although vision suggests sight as a physical operation, and visuality sight as a social fact, the two are not opposed as nature to culture: vision is social and historical too, and visuality involves the body and the psyche. Yet neither are they identical: here, the difference between the terms signals a difference within the visual—between the datum of vision and its discursive determinations—a difference, many differences among how we see, how we are able to see, and how we see this seeing or the unseen therein.[4]

The concepts of *vision and visuality* are further complicated by what Martin Jay describes as "competing ocular fields." In his essay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," Jay claims that although the sense of sight dominated the modern era, there is no unified scopic regime; rather, there are competing "scopic regimes" or "ocular fields" within the modern period.[5] Jay highlights three main visual subcultures present in the multiplicity of visual cultures in

modernity: the Cartesian perspectivalism of Italian Renaissance painting, the Dutch art of describing that flourished in the seventeenth-century, and the Baroque visual experience. Below I highlight distinguishing characteristics of each scopic regime and relate them to twentieth-century avant-garde art practices in general and to Dalí's surrealist paintings in particular.

iii.

The scopic regime credited with defining the practices of Western artists since the Italian Renaissance and the art historical texts about them is Cartesian perspectivalism (also known as *perspectiva artificialis, costruzione legittima*, or scientific perspective). Often it is used to describe the representation of the "natural" experience of sight. The literature dealing with *Cartesian perspectivalism* is vast and covers the topic from many viewpoints beyond the aesthetic including the actual practice of painters and architects; the history of mathematics, science, economics and philosophy; and cultural criticism. In general, this ocular field calls to mind the rationality of the perspectival strategies of the Italian Renaissance.

Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* was one of the first books to address its construction, which he positioned as a straightforward technical procedure.[6] Vasari, considered by many to be the first modern art historian, recounted stories of his contemporaries that suggest the artists of his day used perspective as a means to astonish their friends and win public acclaim

through realistic spatial effects. That similar terms have been used to denigrate Dalí's contribution to the history of modern art will be considered later in this dissertation.

Another significant early text on perspective is Alberti's treatise of 1435, *Della pittura.* Even today, writers turn to Alberti's text to explore the origins of perspectival space, while recognizing that few Italian Renaissance pictures were actually painted according to the rules Alberti defined. The treatise described Filippo Brunelleschi's spatial innovations and laid down many of the terms used today to discuss perspective. For instance, Alberti linked *istoria* to interpretation, used a visual pyramid to deal with the problems of unified space, and gave us the metaphor of a painting as a "window on the world."[7] Pictorial space as defined by Alberti is fixed, rationalized and unified. In Italian Renaissance paintings we see the origin of that aspect of mainstream modernism that theorized a disembodied, transcendental eye free of the body's desire. Their illusionistic strategies enabled Renaissance painters to convey the abstract lessons found in religious and mythological narratives.

In *Ways of Seeing*, John Berger addressed the metaphysical connotations of perspectival construction:

> The convention of perspective, which is unique to European art and which was first established in the early Renaissance, centers everything on the eye of the beholder. It is like a beam from a lighthouse—only instead of light traveling outward, appearances travel in. The conventions called those

> appearances *reality*. Perspective makes the single eye the center of the visible world. Everything converges on to the eye as to the vanishing point of infinity. The visible world is arranged for the spectator as the universe was once thought to be arranged for God.[8]

In his autobiography, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí,* Dalí described Renaissance architecture as "these products of materialized intelligence that were concrete, measurable and supremely non-necessary," which "impressed me more and more as being the startling and perfect achievement of the human spirit in the realm of esthetics."[9] He deeply admired Raphael, whom he described as "a genius bathed in celestial silence" and one of "the true superior spirits of our epoch."[10]

Dalí's interest in and use of Cartesian perspectivalism in his surrealist paintings, however, diverges from its founding principles: his art does not encourage fixed interpretation or the finding of a coherent meaning. If a single vanishing point as seen in Renaissance-style illusionism attempted to convey a particular point of view—a stable cosmos as seen from the viewer's perspective—then Dalí's representations of multiple and conflicting vanishing points must address something different. In his surrealist paintings, the disembodied viewer presupposed by Cartesian perspectivalism gives way to the profoundly embodied eye of the viewer. Instead of abstract lessons, Dalí's psychologically-informed vision zeros in on intimate themes. His paintings deal with masturbation, Oedipal violence, voyeurism, sado-masochism and various sexual fantasies. Often viewers aren't sure whether

they are interpreting Dalí's paintings or imaginatively extending them to encompass their own sexualized vision. In spite of what some might call transgressive illusionistic goals, Dalí's representations of disharmony, instability, irrationality and even chaos still have roots in Cartesian perspectivalism.

According to Elizabeth Cowling and Jennifer Mundy, co-curators of "On Classic Ground: Picasso, Léger, de Chirico and the New Classicism 1910-1930" [Tate Gallery, Summer 1990] a shift occurs in Western art practices in 1917 toward a specific reinterpretation of classicism. They locate this shift in the works of a few artists including Picasso, who they allege anticipated the general direction of avant-garde artists in France, Spain and Italy after the war.[11] Clarity, order and universality define this classical revival or *la rappel à l'ordre* of the post-World War I period.

Included in this exhibition was Dalí's drawing, *Portrait of the Artist's Father and Sister* (1925), which is described in the catalogue as one of Dalí's "classical" masterpieces. This drawing was first shown in Dalí's second one-man exhibition at Galerie Dalmau in Barcelona from December 31, 1926 to January 14, 1927. Dalmau brought together 23 paintings and 7 drawings by Dalí painted in an unusual and controversial combination of cubo-futurist and naturalist style.[12] Cowling and Mundy emphasized Dalí's academic draughtsmanship, which they identify with Ingres, who they note was cited three times in the catalogue for Dalí's first one man show at Galerie Dalmau.

They base their association with Ingres on evidence such as the faces of Dalí's father and sister—meticulously drawn and shaded while the bodies are sketchily outlined—which was Ingres's usual rendering style. Moreover, Cowling and Mundy note a direct relationship between the father's pose and Ingres's *Portrait of Monsieur Bertin* in the Louvre. While it is true that Dalí's portrait of his father refers to the Ingres painting, there is an important difference between the classicism of Ingres and Dalí. A portrait by Ingres typically represents an incisive likeness of the sitter, whereas the features of the faces of Dalí's father and sister have a generalized quality more akin to classical sculpture. Although, as noted by the co-curators, the catalogue for Dalí's first exhibition at Dalmau makes explicit references to Ingres, the source for Dalí's more generalized classicism is probably Picasso's neo-classical paintings and drawings. The influence of Picasso's neo-classicism on Dalí is obvious in work produced before his visit to Picasso's studio in April 1926, for example, Dalí's *Portrait of Luis Buñuel* (1924), *Portrait of Ana María* (1924), and *Portrait of the Artist's Father* (1925) [Fig. 2]. Classicism in Dalí's surrealist *oeuvre* becomes more complicated and interesting when considered in light of his meeting with Picasso.

iv.

Picasso's role in the development of Dalí's painting style can be

neither overemphasized nor easily categorized. In 1918, the Catalan journal *Vell i Nou* published reproductions of cubist and neoclassical works by Picasso painted in Barcelona in 1917. Dalí probably knew this publication because his uncle, Anselm Domènech, a notable bookseller in Barcelona, gave him easy access to local and international art and literary publications. Lubar suggests:

> Picasso's stylistic facility in moving between cubism and a more traditional figuration suggested a new direction in modern art to the young Dalí, who followed the older artist's example in the works he produced and executed in the years 1923-25.[13]

Lubar is right to suggest that a shift of some sort occurs after 1925. This shift, I would argue, is conditioned by Dalí's visit to Picasso's studio. Between 1919 and 1928, a critical period in the development of Dalí's mature style, Picasso had nine one-man exhibitions and participated in numerous group shows in Paris including the first exhibition of surrealist painting at the Galerie Pierre. Dalí also knew André Breton's influential text, *Surrealism and Painting* (1925), which embraced Picasso as the progenitor of the surrealist movement. The works by Dalí exhibited in Madrid in 1925 at the Exposicíon de la Sociedad de Artistas Ibéricos (ESAI) caught the eye of the show's reviewers in part because of their cubist references. Taken as a whole, Dalí's ten paintings show the influence of the French purists, the Italian metaphysical painters, and Picasso's cubist and neo-classical paintings. Juan de la Encina gave Dalí special notice:

> Cubism doesn't seduce me at all....As a leavening it has been most useful. But as a concrete goal for painting I don't believe it has thus far constructed anything durable....But I won't censor Dalí for his cubist undertakings, taking into account—as demonstrated by his nudes—that he doesn't take refuge in them in order to undo the great discipline of the study of form. To some extent these exercises have enabled him to study with some precision the relation of volumes and proportions....A geometric exercise of this sort can be useful when it comes to composition. Dalí is a good draftsman and a good constructor.[14]

In the early 1920s, Dalí had Picasso reproductions on the walls of his studio and grouped certain of his works under the title "Neo-Cubist Academic." Dalí's paintings of 1925—including *Pierrot Playing the Guitar (Harlequin with Small Bottle of Rum), Still Life and Mauve Moonlight* and *Venus and a Sailor* [Fig. 3]—depend on his familiarity with Picasso. It is important to remember, however, that at the time of their meeting, the older artist was himself looking for a new direction in his painting. As Krauss explained in *The Picasso Papers*, this was a time when surrealist painting had caught Picasso's attention:

> Since this is the moment when surrealism appeared on the horizon of his experience, beckoning not only with an elaborate campaign of adulation but with the dramatic evidence that its own stable of artists—most impressively in the example of fellow Spaniard Joan Miró—was capable of producing painting that was both new and inspired. For an artist whose work had become as lax and routinized as Picasso's had by 1924-25, when neoclassicism would certainly have no longer seemed a viable course to follow, the ideas promulgated by André Breton of an art produced unconsciously might well have been seductive.[15]

Dalí's meeting with Picasso was in April 1926. This was after Dalí's

first one-man show in Barcelona at Galerie Dalmau, and before his second show, which was scheduled for the end of 1926. No work by Dalí had yet been shown in Paris or seen by Picasso. A more established cubist painter from Granada, Manuel Angeles Ortiz, who Dalí knew through Gabriel Garcia Lorca, arranged for Dalí to visit Picasso in his studio. An article by Christian Zervos published in June 1926, "Oeuvres récentes de Picasso," which included two photographs of the studio, provides us with some insight into what Dalí probably saw there:

> ...as well as recent collages, examples of two tendencies that characterized his production from 1923 to 1926: works of classical inspiration, such as *The Three Graces*, and a host of still-lifes deriving from his Cubist period.[16]

Dalí also saw Picasso's important work of 1925, *Studio with Plaster Head* [Fig. 4], which influenced Dalí's painting of 1927, *Still Life by Moonlight* [Fig. 5]. Both paintings feature a table top with an assortment of objects including a classical bust. The influence of the purists and Giorgio de Chirico on Picasso and Dalí in the mid-1920s is clear. Dalí's *Composition with Three Figures (Neo-Cubist Academy)* [Fig. 6] also borrows imagery from Picasso's *Studio with Plaster Head*. As described by Gibson:

> Many elements in Picasso's still-life—perhaps a gloss on Chardin's *Attributes of the Arts*—passed directly into Dalí's canvas. The branch by the saint's left flank is almost identical to Picasso's; Dalí has borrowed the plaster-cast head, and the shadow it projects is so similar to Picasso's that it could almost be substituted for it; the framework around the window echoes Picasso's; both works feature pointed, elongated clouds; both, an open book; and the scroll, firmly grasped by the hand of the

> severed arm in the Picasso, reappears in the left hand of Dalí's Sebastian.[17]

Moreover, Gibson connects the two female figures in Dalí's *Composition with Three Figures* (Neo-Cubist Academy) to Picasso's figural neo-classicism of the early 1920s. The monumental women in *The Source* (1921), *Large Bather* (1921) and *Two Women Running on the Beach* also known as *The Race* (1922) [Fig. 7] are good examples of Picasso figures which influenced Dalí. According to Gibson, one of the reproductions on Dalí's studio wall was *Two Women Running on the Beach.*

Dalí's description of this meeting conveys the idea that Picasso both recognized his own stellar position in the history of art and generously gave his young compatriot an accelerated course in modern painting.[18] As Dalí tells it:

> When I arrived at Picasso's on Rue de La Boétie I was as deeply moved and as full of respect as though I were having an audience with the Pope.
>
> "I have come to see you," I said, "before visiting the Louvre."
>
> "You're quite right," he answered.
>
> I brought a small painting, carefully packed, which was called *The Girl of Figueres."* He looked at it for at least fifteen minutes, and made no comment whatever. After which we went up to the next story, where for two hours Picasso showed me quantities of his paintings. He kept going back and forth, dragging out great canvases which he placed against the easel. Then he went to fetch others among an infinity of canvases stacked in rows against the wall. I could see that he was going to enormous trouble. At each new canvas he cast me a glance filled with a vivacity and an intelligence so violent that it made me tremble. I left without in turn having made the slightest comment.

> At the end, on the landing of the stairs, just as I was about to leave we exchanged a glance which meant exactly,
> "You get the idea?"
> "I get it!"

Later that year, while in Barcelona, Picasso saw Dalí's work. Soon after, Picasso recommended the young artist to his dealer, Paul Rosenberg. A friendship never developed between the two artists although over the years they maintained some contact and Picasso occasionally helped Dalí financially.

Dalí's oil-on-panel painting of 1926, *Femme Couchée (Sleeping Woman)* [Fig. 8] confirms Picasso's influence on Dalí at a turning point in the younger artist's career. The subject of the painting is a female form in classical drapery splayed on a rocky platform. Dalí represented the parts of her body as though they were hard-edged pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. The painting insists we notice its perspectival strategies—yet at every turn these strategies impede understanding the body and how it fits into the space of the painting. Gibson tells us that the subject belongs to "the category the painter baptized crudely as trossos de cony ('bits of cunt')".[19] Spread legs, clenched fist, erect nipples and a suggestively shaped and placed shadow eroticize the female body. Yet the way that Dalí presents her figure—in angled fragments pieced together—obstructs any appeal to sentimentality.

An important detail in *Femme Couchée* connects it to Picasso's formal preoccupation at the time of Dalí's visit and to the development of Dalí's

paranoiac thinking. This feature is the use of redoubling in Picasso's single large-scale painting of 1926—*The Milliner's Workshop*—and in the related drawings Picasso was working on at the time of Dalí's visit. Krauss noted in the drawings a redoubling "of profile and front face to produce a duality within the single head (a redoubling that occurs whether Picasso is following the laws of synthetic cubism or proceeding by means of an 'automatist,' curvilinear tracery)."[20] No doubt this redoubling influenced the double imagery of the female figure's face in Dalí's *Femme Couchée*. There is a difference, however, in Dalí's use of the double imagery in this painting: he presented the sitter in full face and then in profile on the figure's right arm rather than following Picasso's lead of conflating the profile and front face in the same form. As we will discuss in more detail in Chapter Three, the representation of double and even multiple imagery will be a staple in Dalí's surrealist paintings and fundamental to his paranoid-critical method. Dalí acknowledged the relationship between this new direction in his painting and Picasso when he inscribed "Picasso's influence" on a related drawing.[21]

Dalí's second one-man show at Galerie Dalmau in Barcelona included *Femme Couchée*. The Catalan art critic Sebastìa Gasch mentioned it and two other paintings in his review of the show:

> Within the confines of this style Dalí has realized works that are almost perfect. However, we believe that Dalí does not have to force his character, that this character does not have to force itself unnecessarily, and that he has to make an effort, within this intelligent neoclassicism, to surpass the victories he has

> won and to temper his logic with a breadth of humanity. Recently, however, Dalí, who has his modish side, has allowed himself to be led by fashion and has plunged wildly into the painting of canvases in the style of Picasso's most recent works.[22]

Gasch, who beginning in May 1926 had a regular column in the Catalan journal, *L'Amic de les Arts* (The Friend of the Arts), advocated purism and cubism and strongly opposed Dalí's interest in surrealism.[23] In spite of Gasch's condemnation of the surrealists—he called them "a minuscule, sterile group of sinister lovers of scandal for the sake of scandal"—Dalí was moving in their direction.[24]

v.

From its first issue, *L'Esprit Nouveau*, the journal founded and edited by Le Corbusier and Amédée Ozenfant, proclaimed the creative potential of logic, order, control and rationality. Clarity of conception and objectivity, the purists declared, superseded romantic intuition, the desire to please the senses, and emotionalism. Simply stated, purism maintains that the spectator's apprehension of general notions is intellectual, not sensitive. The purism of Le Corbusier and Ozenfant historically is part of the engaged artist's search during the 1920s and 1930s for a unifying concept that would encompass everything—a kind of design for living.

In purist theory, Dalí saw how everyday, functional, objects could be connected to the classical art of ancient Greece. Moreover, he was drawn to

the purist notion that the contemplation of mass-produced common objects might be a vehicle for transcendence of the quotidian to a second, superior, even ideal world containing timeless concept-objects.

The tenets of *L'Esprit Nouveau* (published in Paris between the two world wars—from March of 1920 until 1925) appealed on another level to artists. *L'Esprit Nouveau* covered a wide-variety of subjects, including literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, theatre, fashion, furniture and cinema. The essay, "Purism," published in the first issue, proclaimed logic "a guide to discovery" that "corrects and controls the sometimes capricious march of intuition and permits one to go ahead with certainty."[25] Dalí first incorporated purist forms into his paintings of the mid-1920s [Fig. 9 and 10]. The lateness of his embrace of this aesthetic, with its dual commitment to the classical and to the new post-war experience, does not diminish the value of his response.

We see Dalí's engagement with the tenets of purism in his essay, "Poetry of Standardized Utility," written in March 1928. In this short text, he described how the "primary logic" of *L'Esprit Nouveau* makes us sensitive to the beauty and wonder of the newborn—and therefore still pure—industrial world. In her discussion of the mid-1920s *rappel à l'ordre,* Krauss addresses the connection Ozenfant made between mechanical drawing and classical "purity," describing it as:

> —a purported classicism that will have as its generative subject

> an array of bottles and wineglasses and pitchers wrought by mass production. Ozenfant will rationalize his decision to take these implements as the nexus of his classicism by calling them 'objets types'; but the fact that they are the prototypes of multiples produced in the millionfold betrays the connection between automation and a classicism that cannot by this point in time be called a style but must instead be termed a form of 'styling.'[26]

One of the ways that Dalí diverged from purism's classicism and its "styling" [what Krauss defines as the line's "automated, serialized, mechanical character"] was by juxtaposing the meticulous precision of the products of the mechanical world with the arbitrary, dented, useless "rubbish of antique dealers." Some scholars claim that purism's spiritual and moral integrity appealed to Dalí. I agree, but only when purism is considered together with what Dalí identified as its opposite: *putrefaction*. Purist theory and practice connects mechanization to the classical tradition's ideal. Dalí's notion of putrefaction celebrates the rotten, the base, the formless, and the irrational.

Dalí's iconoclastic project, *Dali on Modern Art: The Cuckolds of Antiquated Modern Art* (1957) provides us with some insight into his thinking in the late 1920s. He begins his discussion of modern art by referring to his "Architectonic project dated 1929, when I was defending the sublime genius of Gaudi in the face of the Protestant face of Le Corbusier." Above this text is a pen-and-ink drawing of two composite forms rendered in the art nouveau style of Gaudi [Fig. 11]. The form on the left consists of three sets of eyes that move from wide-open at the top to tightly shut at the

bottom. In the form on the right, Dalí represents lips, nose and ears in the curvilinear architecture of a fantasy Gaudi high-rise. Neither of the composite forms suggest the rationality of Le Corbusier's line. The transformation of the three pairs of eyes on the left—from clear-eyed to masked blindness—suggests different ways of seeing. The accompanying text, in which Dalí emphatically linked himself and Picasso to their Spanish heritage, elaborated on this theme:

> I expressly want to make this communication in Paris, because France is the most intelligent country in the world, the most rational country in the world, whereas I, Salvador Dalí, come from Spain, which is the most irrational country in the world, the most mystical country in the world.
>
> Everyone knows that intelligence only leads us into the fog of scepticism, that its chief effect is to reduce us to factors having a gastronomical and supergelatinous, Proustian and gamey uncertainty. For which reasons it is well and necessary that Spaniards like Picasso and myself should come to Paris from time to time to dazzle you by putting a raw and bleeding piece of TRUTH before your eyes!"[27]

The reference to Picasso in this text is an example of what Haim Finkelstein calls Dalí's "Picasso obsession," which:

> ...took an excessive form in later years, as reflected in Dalí's writings and public manifestations. But even in the 1930s, Dalí could not hide his ambivalent feelings regarding Picasso, in which admiration for Picasso's genius was tinged with extreme jealousy, and, perhaps, a less obvious current of sexual attraction.[28]

My interest here is in the drawing that accompanied Dalí's text. Its date—1929—corresponds to Georges Bataille's *Documents* period. As we will see

in the next chapter, Dalí was familiar with Bataille's writings and his ideas about the birth of form, which differed markedly from those of Le Corbusier. Le Corbusier's writings consolidated modernism's idea that historically form had gotten progressively more realistic. According to Bataille, however, this alleged inevitable progression breaks down chronologically: instead of getting more realistic, Bataille argued, form in art became less detailed and coherent. Alongside the constructive impulse found in children's art and the cave paintings, for example, Bataille noted that there is always also an element of destruction. In other words, he identified a constant deforming impulse in the chronological development of form in art. He theorized this as an alteration concept that is evolutionary and devolutionary, stable and decomposing.

In *Documents 4* (September 1929), Bataille dealt with the organ of vision itself. This essay, "Eye," subtitled "Cannibal Delicacy", interpreted the razor-to-the-eye scene from Dalí and Buñuel's movie, *Un Chien Andalou*, as a reference to the "extreme seductiveness of the eye" which places it "probably at the boundary of horror." An illustration by J. J. Grandville, "Last Drawings by J. J. Grandville: First Dream—Crime and Expiation," [Fig. 12] which accompanied Bataille's essay, certainly influenced the pen-and-ink drawing Dalí used in his essay on LeCorbusier and Gaudi. The Grandville drawing features a descending series of enormous eyes suggestive of surveillance and pursuit of a criminal. Just before catching the criminal, the

eye metamorphoses into an open-mouthed fish ready to devour its prey. The Grandville drawing also influenced Dalí's painting of 1944 *One Second Before Awakening from a Dream provoked by the Flight of a Bee Around a Pomegranate* [Fig. 13]. As we will see in the next chapter, Bataille's explication of the irrational constituent of vision and his theorization of the concept of the *informe* influenced Dalí at least as much as the purist belief in the creative potential of clarity and rationality.

vi.

When considering Dalí's formal relationship to classicism and modernism another important link is the work of the Italian metaphysical painter, Giorgio de Chirico. As early as 1923-24, Dalí became familiar with the Scuola Metafisica and the magazine it produced between 1919-21, *Valori Plastici,* which included reproductions of the work of de Chirico, Carlo Carrà, Giorgio Morandi and de Chirico's musician-writer-painter brother, Alberto Savinio. *In Dada, Surrealism and Their Heritage*, William Rubin connected de Chirico's illusionism to the early Renaissance painters:

> It was with the art of the *quattrocento* that de Chirico felt his closest affinity. As in Piero della Francesca and Ucello, the foreground figures and objects in *The Philosopher's Conquest, The Double Dream of Spring* and *The Disquieting Muses* occupy a frontal space that is separate from the background which is treated as a foil or backdrop. The High Renaissance continuity of space through the middle ground, as in the mature Raphael, is alien to him, as is its aerial or atmospheric perspective.[29]

In the same essay, Rubin noted an important difference between de Chirico and the *quattrocento* painters:

> Unlike the monumental painting of the *quattrocento*, in which modeling in the round created the illusion of space-displacing solid forms, de Chirico's shading and shallow, virtually ungraduated modeling deny bulk and render his figures flat and spectral. And though his orthogonals would seem schematically to indicate retreating space, the bland, unmodeled surfaces of the planes they delineate remain paradoxically flat on the surface, as on a screen.[30]

For Rubin his formal strategies distanced de Chirico from old-master illusionism and connected him to the abstraction of mainstream modern painting and the unstable mood of the early twentieth century:

> ...de Chirico's classical world was not recollected in tranquility. The pervasive malaise of his vision ended by denying the ordered, rational, structure of experience proposed by fifteenth-century art. And this denial was even more a matter of formal than of literary content.

Rubin interpreted de Chirico's "irrationalizing" of the Italian Renaissance as a reflection of the uncertainties facing a world on the brink of war. Dalí borrowed aspects of de Chirico's visual and textual representations to formulate his own expressions of the irrational.

As evidence of the connection between the texts of de Chirico and Dalí, I compare a 1912 text by de Chirico to a passage from Dalí's auto-biography. In "Meditations of a Painter," de Chirico questioned the aim of future painting, which he saw as dependent on "revelation":

> ...let me recount how I had the revelation of a picture that I will show this year at the Salon d'Automne, entitled *Enigma of an*

> *Afternoon* [Fig. 14]. One clear autumnal afternoon I was sitting on a bench in the middle of the Piazza Santa Croce in Florence. It was of course not the first time I had seen this square. I had just come out of a long and painful intestinal illness, and I was in a nearly morbid state of sensitivity. The whole world, down to the marble of the buildings and fountains, seemed to me to be convalescent. In the middle of the square rises a statue of Dante draped in a long cloak, holding his works clasped against his body, his laurel-crowned head bent thoughtfully earthward. The statue is in white marble, but time has given it a gray cast, very agreeable to the eye. Then I had the strange impression that I was looking at all these things for the first time, and the composition of my picture came to my mind's eye. Now each time I look at this painting I again see that moment. Nevertheless the moment is an enigma to me, for it is inexplicable. And I like also to call the work which sprang from it an enigma.[31]
>
> What I hear is valueless; only what I see is living, and when I close my eyes my vision is even more powerful.

That Dalí was familiar with this text by de Chirico is certain when we compare it to Dalí's description of the circumstances surrounding his well-known painting of soft watches, *The Persistence of Memory* [Fig. 15]:

> It was on an evening when I felt tired, and had a slight headache, which is extremely rare with me. We were to go to a moving picture with some friends, and at the last moment I decided not to go. Gala would go with them, and I would stay home and go to bed early. We had topped off our meal with a very strong Camembert, and after everyone had gone I remained for a long time seated at the table meditating on the philosophic problems of the "super-soft" which the cheese presented to my mind. I got up and went into my studio, where I lit the light in order to cast a final glance, as is my habit, at the picture I was in the midst of painting. This picture represented a landscape near Port Lligat, whose rocks were lighted by a transparent and melancholy twilight; in the foreground an olive tree with its branches cut, and without leaves. I knew that the atmosphere which I had succeeded in creating with this landscape was to serve as a setting for some idea, for some surprising image, but

> I did not in the least know what it was going to be. I was about to turn out the light, when instantaneously I "saw" the solution. I saw two soft watches, one of them hanging lamentably on the branch of the olive tree. In spite of the fact that my headache had increased to the point of becoming very painful, I avidly prepared my palette and set to work. When Gala returned from the theatre two hours later the picture, which was to be one of my most famous, was completed. I made her sit down in front of it with her eyes shut: "One, two, three, open your eyes!" I looked intently at Gala's face, and I saw upon it the unmistakable contraction of wonder and astonishment. This convinced me of the effectiveness of my new image, for Gala never errs in judging the authenticity of an enigma. I asked her, "Do you think that in three years you will have forgotten this image?"
>
> "No one can forget it once he has seen it."[32]

Dalí clearly patterned his description of the conception of *The Persistence of Memory* after de Chirico's narrative on *Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon*. Comparison of these two passages reveals Dalí's singular attentiveness to viewer response to his painting. De Chirico concludes by describing his own experience of the painting that always carries with it the moment of conception: "Now each time I look at this painting I again see that moment." Dalí departs from de Chirico by stressing Gala's enthusiasm for the painting which she connects to each viewer's personal experience: "No one can forget it once he has seen it." Although Dalí borrowed from de Chirico's pictorial vocabulary—marble heroes, fountains, broken columns, steeple clocks, arcades, deserted piazzas, and enigmatic shadows—their aesthetic aims were different.

In de Chirico's paintings, Dalí found a way to represent a dream-like space conducive to the free play of irrational thinking. While the purists and the Italian metaphysical painters incorporated everyday objects into their paintings, the placement on the picture plane encourages very different readings. Instead of the logic and rationality of the purists, de Chirico's paintings are conditioned by a mystery, uncertainty, and even dread that served Dalí's representational goals.

So far we have considered various sources for the classicism that helped to structure Dalí's surrealist paintings. In the next section of this chapter, we will consider the influence of Dutch painting on Dalí.

vii.

One of Dalí's earliest extant paintings, *Dutch Interior* (c1914) [Fig. 16] is a close copy of the Spanish painter Manuel Benedito y Vive's work [Fig. 17] of the same name. Dalí, age 11 or 12 at the time, would have seen it on the cover of the review, *Museum*.[33] The exaggerated tilt of the tabletop in Dalí's copy anticipates the plunging platforms of his first mature works including the stunning paintings *Apparatus and Hand* (1927) [Fig. 18], *Honey is Sweeter than Blood* (1927) [Fig. 19], and *The First Days of Spring* (1929). The window located in the upper one-third of Benedito's painting is another

form that becomes a staple in Dalí's pictorial vocabulary. In *Portrait of Grandmother Anna Sewing* (c.1920) [Fig. 20] and his *Study for Girl Sewing* (1926) [Fig 21], the window occupies more space than it did in his early painting. This emphasizes the existence of a world beyond the home where the woman sits and sews. Jay described the use of the window by surrealist painters "as a transitional or liminal plane between reality and imagination, foreground and background, external and internal worlds."[34] *Large Harlequin and Small Bottle of Rum* (1925), often cited as a testament to Dalí's interest in purism, features both the table-top (here lowered to ground-level) and the window first seen in *Dutch Interior*. Dutch painting, according to Lubar served "an inaugural role in the development of Dalí's aesthetic."[35]

In *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, Svetlana Alpers sharply distinguished between seventeenth-century Dutch art and its Italian counterpart. According to Alpers, the single-point perspective preferred by Italian Renaissance artists evolved in the interest of transmitting religious or mythical stories. In contrast, the seventeenth-century Dutch painters were more concerned with the accurate description of objects: attention to describing the textures and colors of flat surfaces characterizes northern painting, which emphasized the particular over the generalized, and concrete embodiment over the abstract. Moreover, Dutch painting is less about generalized or abstract ideas and more about the particularities of a given place or sitter. She claimed that the northern tradition is an art of

describing and the art of Italy is based on narratives.

Alpers' argument depends on her contention that the discipline of art history developed from strategies designed to analyze Italian art; in particular, Heinrich Wolfflin's categories for stylistic analysis and Erwin Panofsky's work on iconography.[36] In his discussion of Dutch art as a scopic regime, Jay pointed out that Alpers gave short shrift to denarratized Italian art, and to Dutch artists like Rembrandt whose paintings told stories.[37] Jay noted both active and passive qualities in Dutch painting: there is a northern preference for "passive" recording of what is actually seen but this passive quality combined with a recognition of "the active potential in vision—its probing, penetrating, searching qualities." Jay departed from Alpers in his insistence on the active search for control and domination of the northern painters, which he equated to the grid southern painters used to define visual space.

To contextualize the influence of Dutch painting on Dalí, it is interesting to note that renewed interest in Dutch painting in France in the 1860s coincided with the camera's first impact on art. In his discussion of this nineteenth-century phenomenon, Jay cited Alpers:

> Many characteristics of photographs—those very characteristics that make them so real—are common also to the northern descriptive mode: fragmentariness; arbitrary frames; the immediacy that the first practitioners expressed by claiming that the photograph gave Nature the power to reproduce herself directly unaided by man. If we want historical precedence for the photographic image it is in the rich mixture of seeing, knowing, and picturing that manifested itself in seventeenth-century images.[38]

The connection between Dutch painting and photography helps to shed light on the evolution of Dalí's representational strategies. We know from a letter he wrote to his friend Lorca in 1926 that Dalí went to Brussels that year to copy Dutch painting.[39] Dalí's representations of certain forms—tile floors, pitchers, bread, draped fabric, facial expressions, and street scenes featuring multiple doors and windows—confirm this influence. Moreover, Dalí included the theme of Dutch painting in his essay "Photography, Pure Creation of the Mind":

> Let us be content with the immediate miracle of opening our eyes and being adept in the apprenticeship of looking properly. Closing your eyes is an anti-poetic way of perceiving resonances....[Vermeer of Delft's] eyes are the example of the greatest probity.[40]

Lubar expanded on this connection in his highly theoretical essay, "Articles of Desire: Dalí, Vermeer, and the 'Phallic Ghost.'" Lubar's proficient application of a broad range of theories—including Jacques Lacan on the role of desire in looking; Roland Barthes on reading Dutch painting as a semiological structure; Foster on fetishism in Dutch art; Alpers on Dutch painting as an art of description; Norman Bryson on the Gaze and the Glance;

and Michel Foucault's structuralist reading of Magritte—strengthens what otherwise could seem a highly subjective argument. Given Lubar's theoretical range, one of his contributions to Dalí scholarship is the unparalleled way he has brought his insights to bear on the formal and structural characteristics of Dalí's art.

Lubar sees Dutch painting in general and Vermeer in particular as fundamental to Dalí's conception of painting. He asserts that "Dalí's interest in northern art depends on its descriptive realism" and in "reading his own work through the grid of Dutch art of the Golden Age." Lubar's use of Alpers' elaboration of the mapping influence in Dutch painting—which relies on her analysis of Vermeer's *Art of Painting* (c.1666-7)—is particularly useful. "As Dalí intuited," wrote Lubar, "Vermeer's world is a field of signs in which the reified gaze of the transcendental viewer is renounced—abandoned, as it were, to the play of semiosis."[41] For Dalí, continued Lubar, the art of perception "finds its gentle and moving highpoint in Vermeer's painting, which...represents a case of the greatest, most humble, and dramatic integrity in the history of close looking." Moreover, Lubar concluded: "If the function of Renaissance perspective is to pacify—or to use Lacan's terminology, 'lay down'—the gaze, Dalí insists on its phallic presence." In his paintings of the mid-twenties, Dalí re-considered the act of looking as a means to challenge the unity of the subject and repositioned it within painting's framework.[42] The descriptive realism of Dutch painting is

not simply a stylistic influence: it is present in the iconography and in the structure of Dalí's surrealist oeuvre.

Not all scholars see Dutch art as fundamental to Dalí's aesthetic development. Finkelstein, for example, dismissed its significance. After 1926, he wrote, when the artist had "a short fling with a Vermeerlike realism", he embraced metaphysical art and the style of Picasso's still-lifes of the mid-1920s. The difference between the positions of Lubar and Finkelstein is germane to this dissertation: the conclusions which result from Lubar's attention to the structure of Dalí's paintings differ from the conclusions of Finkelstein, who relied mainly on Dalí's texts. While both scholars have made important contributions to Dalí studies, Lubar's argument in favor of the significance of Dutch art on Dalí's development—grounded as it is in close analysis of the form and structure of the paintings themselves—is more convincing. Moreover, the following exploration of the influence of the Baroque scopic regime on Dalí broadens out from and sustains Lubar's main thesis: Dalí's paranoid-critical method depended on his ability to insinuate desire into the very structure of his paintings.

viii.

The Baroque visual experience of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-

centuries accentuated the irrational aspect of vision. As persuasively argued by Jay, it celebrated the confusing interplay of form and chaos, surface and depth, transparency and obscurity and undermined the very origin of the word "perspective," which means "seeing through." Artists during the Baroque period took Cartesian perspectivalism and used it to represent vision's irrational and perhaps its most contemporary side. In *Baroque Reason: The Aesthetics of Modernity* Christine Buci-Glucksmann claims that a logic of ambivalence constitutes modernity. Instead of finding the roots of modernity in universalism, rationality and coherence, she located its origins in Freud's uncanny, which is conditioned by the principles of contradiction and ambivalence. She supports her argument by citing Walter Benjamin's concept of history as conveyed by his description of Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*:

> Imagine a city with several entrances, a labyrinthine proliferation of squares, crossroads, thoroughfares and side streets, a kind of multibody of the past and memory. In short a Baroque town: Rome, Vienna, perhaps Mexico City. Here a *flaneur* is eagerly seeking out the new and the strange scale-games played with reality and unreality. In this theatre the traveller with no homeland and no source of rest meets a venerable old man. "Who are you?' he asks. 'I am disillusion' *(Yo soy el desengaño)* comes the reply. The man takes him on a tour of this phantasmal city with a thousand faces. They come to a main street, nameless and without end, inhabited by a thousand figures: the Street of Hypocrisy. And there they find a beautiful woman who leaves hearts filled with sighing and desire, a gentle face of snow and roses wrapped in her own aura—the very object of love. The master of disillusion then reveals all: her teeth have been artificially whitened, her hair dyed, her face skilfully made up, and behind the appearances age and death are

> doing their work. Everywhere in this street of the mighty and beautiful, the world is upside down. Madame Fashion and Madame Death are on the prowl. It must be turned the right side up again: to baffle all the frontiers of the real and unreal, belief and knowledge, world and theatre; to see the world from within.[43]

Benjamin's text brings us face-to-face with what Jay and Buci-Glucksmann connect to the Baroque scopic regime: the murky territory of desire, melancholy, and death expressed in a representationally subversive manner. In other words, what was left out of Cartesian perspectivalism's rational seeing strategies may have first emerged during the Baroque period. In his essay, "New Limits of Painting," Dalí confirmed for us his interest in mapping this repressed terrain by citing Maurice Raynal:

> If an Angel of Truth exists in art, it will serve no purpose to deny that the genius of the absurd often walks by its side....And since truth in philosophy is not really truth as such, but rather what is generally acknowledged as such, the absurd may be considered as a kind of fount of truths of a completely personal order.[44]

As we know, this territory was also explored by Hans Holbein. His painting, *The Ambassadors* (1533), has often been characterized as the quintessential anamorphic painting. The skewed skull in the foreground seems intended to subvert the rational order conveyed by the Renaissance logic of the rest of the painting.[45] Dalí began to represent a variation on anamorphic imagery in his paintings in 1928. Lubar noted that in his 1934 essay, "Apparitions aérodynamiques des 'êtres-objets'" published in *Minotaure,* Dalí presented his own version of Holbein's famous form:

> In Dalí's reinterpretation of this celebrated image, the anamorphic skull represents the divided nature of human subjectivity—the death, one might say, of the Cartesian, self-identical subject. Dalí specifically associates the anamorphic skull with spectral apparitions, disintegration, instability, and the 'destruction of illusory volume'; that is to say, with the eclipse of the desiring subject. As he insists elsewhere, anamorphosis is a psychic state that is defined by the 'instantaneous reconstitution of desire deformed through its refraction by a cycle of memories.[46]

As Lubar points out, Holbein's anamorphosis is merely a point of departure for Dalí. Likewise, Dalí learned from Holbein's contemporary, Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1527-1593). Arcimboldo is best known for representations of composite figures. Peter C. Sutton's essay, "Artificial Magic," begins with a description of Arcimboldo's work:

> To modern viewers these works seem merely amusing or whimsically bizarre, but in his own day Arcimboldo was celebrated at the sixteenth-century Hapsburg court as an artist of profound wit and invention. His most influential contribution was the "composite" figure, usually viewed bust-length and in profile but also sometimes depicted full length, made up of numerous individual but symbolically related motifs. Often his composite figures were produced in series and personify concepts, such as the Seasons or the Elements....Arcimboldo also created 'double images' in which two related things were represented at the same time, such as a platter of roasted meat which also can be read as a portrait of a cook.[47].

Sutton distinguishes Dalí's anamorphic distortions from those of his predecessors:

> ...most of Dalí's expressively deformed images are not anamorphic images proper in the sense that they can be resolved simply by discovering the necessary viewpoint. Rather, his manipulation of form took a more liberated, mobile and freely creative approach. Dalí obviously admired the

> stretched, smeared and elided imagery of traditional anamorphosis as well as its capacity to encode internal visions and personal iconography. But his was a more sophisticated approach to perspective, which not only sought to accommodate the moving eye and the infinitely more complex world of Keplerian binocular sight, but also attempted to give form to the inner vision of modern psychology.[48]

In *Documents* no. 4 [September 1929] two Dalí paintings—*Bathers* and *Female Bather*—were reproduced below an anamorphic painting, *St. Anthony of Padua and the Infant Jesus,* by an anonymous sixteenth-century painter.[49] According to Ades, "The immediate visual effect of the resemblance between the melting morphology of the bodies in Dalí's paintings and the distortions of the anamorphic image was arresting and certainly intentional on the part of the review's editor."

Dalí recognized that the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theories of perspective wrestled with the problem of marrying empirical observation of the natural world with the belief in a world beyond it. Reality, in other words, was a contestable issue and inventions such as anamorphic perspective posited a "hidden reality" which suggested analogies with the unknowable of the unconscious.[50] Dalí's painting, *The Invisible Man* [Fig. 22], according to Lubar, provides an insightful description of how this operates structurally:

> In *The Invisible Man* of 1929-1932, Dalí's first multiple-image painting in the strict sense, the relation between unity and fragmentation that defines both the calligram and Dalí's use of anamorphic imagery is choreographed in the form of a perceptual shift, or visual elision, between two distinct images

> in a deep perspectival space: the shoulder and upper arm of a man is at once the torso of a woman seen from behind. For the two images to register as coherent *gestalts*, however, we must conceive the illusion of depth as somehow being canceled, squeezed from the surface of the painting, as ground collapses into figure, and figure into ground. In the absence of determinate spatial coordinates, the figure remains partially invisible, engulfed by ambient space; trapped, as it were, in a hall of mirrors. What remains is only a supplement, a trace of something left over, *something to be desired.*[51]

To express "desire in looking," Dalí took as his starting point the rationally-based perspectival method of the Italian Renaissance which in turn he intentionally distorted to represent the irrational. At the same time, as we will explore, his figural and formal choices convert the viewer into a voyeur by insisting on the presence of desire in the very act of looking. In his only novel, *Hidden Faces* (1943), Dalí commented on "the annihilating power" of anamorphosis, which he linked to Leonardo da Vinci. In one scene, a dinner party, Dalí described an uncanny coincidence sparked by the host's fascination with the figures and faces of his friends. The guests become unrecognizable to the host as he stares at their reflections in the china plates and silverware on the table. He allows for "unsuspected relationships and the most striking resemblances with the vanished personalities of their ancestors":

> Exactly as in the famous series of monstrous faces drawn by Leonardo, one could here observe each of the faces of the guests caught in the ferocious meshes of anamorphosis, twisting, curling, extending, lengthening and transforming their lips into snouts, stretching their jaws, compressing their skulls and flattening their noses to the farthest heraldic and totemic

> vestiges of their own animality. No one could escape this subtle and cruelly revealing inquisition of optical physics, which by the imperceptible torture of its constraint was able to snatch the avowal of degrading sneers and unavowable grimaces from appearances that were the most dignified and set in nobility. As if in an instantaneous demoniac flash one saw the dazzling teeth of a jackal in the divine face of an angel, and the stupid eye of a chimpanzee would gleam savagely in the serene face of the philosopher.[52]

The seamless conversion of one form into another as described in this passage structures Dalí's paranoiac imagery. In *The Art of Interference: Stressed Readings in Verbal & Visual Texts*, Mary Ann Caws identifies Dalí's feast table scene as a parody of the traditional novel's *set piece*:

> Here various anamorphic transformations and reductions, the innings and outings of sight and their vagaries, bring back the past into the present faces, and into the present facets of experience, not in order to support them as in the classic dinner scene (we have only to think of the dinner parties in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* or *The Waves*), but to undo them. The faces become Lilliputian in size, the concavities and convexities of the silver pieces reflect and distort and yet reveal the affinities with the ancestors....
>
> Indeed, then the present faces are hidden, as Dalí's title indicates, by the overlays both of past memories and of presenting imaginings; and the crucially real present—whatever its truth might be—is hidden with them. The reflections and deforming alterations seem to be the only currently available truth. Caricature makes presence bearable, but renders improbable all notions of messages and meanings transmitted and true.[53]

Caws contrasts Dalí's "nightmare" with Breton's "symbolic fluidity, and...implied power of transformation, whereas Dalí incessantly links water to a fixity of gaze and a dramatic motionless of person. Even in the

celebrated fluid clock, the atmosphere is one of nightmare rather than one of transformative dream."[54] In Chapter Three, we will explore how in Dalí's visual art his variations on anamorphic imagery mimic the logic of desire, which to remain in play must at once make and lose its object. Dalí's surrealist paintings are not puzzles that can be solved once we have adequate knowledge. On the contrary, their unifying theme is how concrete forms can evoke multiple meanings rather than singular truth. With this goes the notion that the most exquisite pleasure is secured through what is just beyond our grasp. In *Hidden Faces*, the relationship between Hervé de Grandsailles and Solange de Cléda depends on unsatisfied desire. Dalí described their "bizarre passion":

> For five years they had played at a merciless war of mutual seduction, more and more anxious and irritating, having as yet crystallized only to the point of exacerbating a growing impulse of rivalry and self-assertion which the slightest sentimental avowal or weakness would seriously have threatened with disillusionment. Each time the Count had felt Solange's passion yield to calms of tenderness he had come forward eagerly with new pretexts to wound her vanity and re-establish the wild and rearing aggressive attitude which is that of unsatisfied desire when, whip in hand, one obliges it to overcome more and more insurmountable obstacles of pride.[55]

I cite Dalí's description of the Count's desire because I believe it provides some insight into the ambivalence and contradiction Dalí intended to evoke in his paintings. Like his novel's protagonist, in his visual art Dalí aimed to keep desire in play—leaving his viewer hanging was an accomplishment. The elusiveness of meaning compels sustained looking. I attribute Dalí's capacity

to actively engage his viewer to his representational skill and, as we will see in the next chapter, his use of paranoiac thinking to represent what he called "concrete irrationality." In terms of the history of modernism, what set Dalí apart from his contemporaries is the way that this capacity allowed him to crystallize the cultural mood of surrealism.

The practice of anamorphic painting provided a formal basis for the anatomical distortions that structured much of Dalí's paranoid imagery. An early example of how he used his paranoid-critical method to set up unexpected and disquieting comparisons appeared in *Le Surréalism au service de la révolution* no.3 (December 1931). As Ades described it:

> Following a period of reflection on Picasso's African-period cubist paintings, [Dalí] had come upon a photograph in a pile of old papers, while searching for an address, which he instantaneously read as a reproduction of a Picasso. Puzzled by the second 'mouth' in the cubist head, he realized that what he had taken for a vertical image was in fact a horizontal snapshot of an African village. The alteration in viewpoint here, shifting from the vertical to the horizontal is not typical of the paranoiac double image, and in this the latter also differs from the anamorphic. The configurations which could be read in multiple ways were normally also viewed from a single position. What struck Dalí about his 'paranoiac face' was not only the momentary illusion of a totally alternative reading, but the fact, confirmed when he showed the photograph to André Breton, that the illusion was directed by a personal obsession; where he saw a Picasso head, Breton saw a bust of the Marquis de Sade, with powdered wig, conforming to his own preoccupations.[56]

In *The Surrealist Look*: *An Erotics of Encouter*, Caws claims "baroque sensibility and techniques have an urgent application in the world of surrealism and its reversal of words, thoughts and concepts and its

exuberant ways of thinking and expressing in general." According to Caws, the Baroque "teaches us to think about reversals, upside-downness, and in-outness" which she "summarizes briefly as fascination with what is complex, multiple, clouded, and changeable."[57] Anamorphosis, Dutch painting and Cartesian perspectivalism are all essential to Dalí's paranoiac thinking—the crux of his surrealist art. Art history and its traditions provided Dalí with the tools and materials to drive the last nail in the coffin of equating seeing and believing.

[1]Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 259. In his study of shifting twentieth-century conceptions of the visual experience in France, Jay emphasizes the importance to the surrealists of *Un Chien Andalou* (1929). Jay's interest in the philosophical shift away from ocularcentrism (vision's domination of a culture or age) conditions his focus on the film's fascinatingly horrific scene of a razor slicing a woman's eyeball. Buñuel attributed the idea for this scene to Dalí, who witnessed a sliver of cloud bisect the moon. The filmakers's use of montage to substitute a dead cow's eye for the woman's did not detract from its stunning realism.

[2]Two important exceptions to this are Dawn Ades and Robert Lubar. At the Dalí Colloquium hosted by the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí in Figueres, Spain, September 17-20, 1996 I had the opportunity to exchange ideas on the current state of Dalí research and scholarship. Moreover, their publications, cited throughout this dissertation, provide a foundation for my project.

[3]Books related to perspective in Dalí's personal library include Albert Floçon and René Taton, *La Perspective*, 1963 inscribed with an elaborate perspective drawing by Flocon to Gala and Salvador Dalí; Francine-Claire Legrand, *Guiseppe Arcimboldo et les arcimboldesques*, 1955, a gift to Dalí from A. Reynolds Morse; Matila Ghyka, *The Geometry of Art and Life*, 1946. Dalí often made drawings in the margins of his books based on the book's illustrations. An important example of this is Matila Ghyka's *Essai sur le rythme*, 1938. In addition to marginal sketches there is a full-page ink drawing of a landscape by Dalí opposite the planche, "Rythme et musique" on page 96. The most revelatory book in Dalí's library may be Rex Vicat Cole's *Perspective As Applied to Pictures* (London: Seeley, Service & Co., Ltd., 1921. Vicat surveys the practice and theory of perspective as employed by artists including Leonard, Titian, and the Flemish painters followed by a section dealing with perspective's application to architecture. The frontispiece drawing—A Lych Gate—by the author features perspectival strategies such as the narrowing of stairs, suggestions of unlimited space, and implied openings beyond the surface structure. Vicat illustrates his text with a combination of naturalistic renderings and diagrams which appear to have influenced Dalí's work of the mid-1920s such as his studies for *Girl Sewing* (1926). Vicat's book may have helped to make Dalí conscious of the power of foregrounding what is typically repressed, i.e., the strategies artist's use to represent three-dimensions on two-dimensional surface.

[4]Hal Foster, editor, *Vision and Visuality,* Dia Art Foundation, no. 2 (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988), ix. For a discussion of how vision and its techniques and discourses have been periodized historically, see Jonathan Crary "Modernizing Vision" in the same volume and *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993. In *The Optical Unconscious*, Rosalind Krauss projects Lacan's L-schema onto the Klein Group grid as a means to acknowledge the contradictions repressed by mainstream modernism's visual logic (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993.

[5]Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," *Vision and Visuality*, 3. Jay complicates Christian Metz's term "scopic regime" [*The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*, trans. Celia Britton et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 61] by proposing the scopic regime of modernity as comprised of several competing ocular fields or regimes.

[6]Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, translated by George Bull, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1965. In her discussion of "Contemporary Issues" in *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), Michael Ann Holly writes: In 1917, Ernst Heidrich called the work of any evolutionist historian of art, from Vasari through Riegl, 'one gigantic fiction' because it made overtly facile connections between periods almost always proceeding from antiquity to the Renaissance without taking the Middle Ages into account." p. 99. In the preface, Holly calls for a re-examination of the "history of art history." Vasari, she writes "acknowledges that a writer on art is necessarily a contemporary critic and theoriest of style as well as a 'scientific historian.' Complete repression of personal biases or theoretical commitments, Vasari suggests, would mean that the art historian merely compiled 'lists.' Is it possible that we today are more unwilling to examine the rationale for the methods we employ than Vasari was nearly half a millennium ago?"

[7]Hubert Damisch, *The Origin of Perspective*, translated by John Goodman, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994), xvii. Damisch (p. 233) cautions against the error "in thinking, or wanting to think...that perspective construction constitutes a kind of code, even a language, when in fact it only gave painters a model...providing at the same time a regulating configuration intended not so much to inform the representation as to orient and control its regime."

[8]John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London, 1972), 16; quoted in Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* 55.

[9]Salvador Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* (New York: Dial Press, 1942), 352.

[10]*Dalí on Modern Art: The Cuckolds of Antiquated Modern Art* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1996, 49. Originally published by The Dial Press, New York, 1957.

[11]Elizabeth Cowling and Jennifer Mundy, Catalogue for the Tate Gallery exhibition: 6 June—2 September 1990, *On Classic Ground: Picasso, Léger, de Chirico and the New Classicism 1910-1930* (London: Tate Gallery Publications, 1990), 11. The authors note parallel movements in Germany and Britain but focus on Latin countries because classicism's roots are in that region. If a return to figuration in general had been their theme, the scope of their study would be wider.

[12]Ibid., 90.

[13]Joan Sacs, "La Pintura d'En Picasso, I" *Vell i Nou* (Barcelona) 4 no. 72 (August 1, 1918); 287-293; and Joan Sacs, "La Pintura d'En Picasso, II" *Vell i Nou* (Barcelona), 4, no. 73 (August 15, 1918): 307-310; quoted in Robert S. Lubar, *Dalí: The Salvador Dalí Museum Collection* (Boston: A Bulfinch Press Book, 2000), 29.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Picasso Papers* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998), 226-7.

[16]Ian Gibson, *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí,* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 173.

[17]Ibid., 189-190.

[18]Dalí, *The Secret Life,* 206.

[19]Gibson, 191.

[20]Krauss, *The Picasso Papers,* 228.

[21]Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions," catalogue for the exhibition *Dalí's Optical Illusions*, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, January 21-March 26, 2000 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 66.

[22]Sebastìa Gasch, "Salvador Dalí," *L'Amic de les arts* (Sitges) 11 (February 28, 1927): 16-17; as translated in Montserrat Aguer and Fèlix Fanés, "Illustrated Biography," in *Salvador Dalí: The Early Years*, exhibition catalogue, South Bank Centre, London, 1994, 29.

[23]Gibson, 220.

[24]In the catalogue for the *Exposition Salvador Dalí* at Pierre Colle Gallerie, June 19-29, 1933, there is an essay by Dalí that addresses Breton and begins in Dalí's handwriting: "One. *Breton l'exposition de mes peintres de l'an coincide avec* [from here forward the essay is typewritten] *l'étude obsédante (devant s'intégrere à mon prochain ouvrage La Peinture Surréaliste à travers les âges) de ce phénomène tellement fin, substantiel et phénoménal qui constitue pour moi, en ce moment, le côté Ludwig II de Bavière.* [At this point Dalí discusses photography, Meissonier and Napoleon. The following three pages—over one-half of the essay—deal with Picasso and de Chirico: *"deux phénomènes déterminants....ces deux phénomènes nous amènent à des choses phénoménalement differentes.*] The following is from Dalí's text on Picasso: *Léger est-il cubiste? Continuons: La suite vitale du cubisme, il faut donc la chercher, non parmi les cubistes, mais au contraire voir sa continuation chez Picasso lui-même et parmi les Duchamp, Miró, Tanguy, Giacometti, Arp. Comme on va le voir, ce processus amène partiellement et parallèlement aux découvertes spécifiquement surréalistes, sur lesquelles je n'insisterai pas, à l'état actual de 'l'objet' et aux 'préoccupations actuelles quant aux objets.' L'objet nait en effet de ces sortes de tableaux où l'on aurait pu déjà reconnaître sa présence embryonnaire.* The objects in the exhibition were *Paysage déjà vu (boîte atmosphérique)* and *Quelques objets atmosphériques présentant de légers symptômes d'opéra.*

[25]David Batchelor, "Purism and L'Esprit Nouveau," *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism* (New Haven: Yale University Press in association with The Open University, 1990), 19.

[26]Krauss, *Picasso Papers*, 153. See also her discussion in *The Optical Unconscious* (pp. 157-8) of Ozenfant's *Foundations of Modern Art* in which he argues for the absoluteness of vision. According to Krauss, Ozenfant claims "the eye responds to optical phenomena invariantly, so that nothing changes in this experience from the dawn of man to the present moment."

However, Krauss continues, "[I]n sketching these conditions of the visual in their full primordiality, Ozenfant constructs an image that is curiously like [Roger] Caillois's mimetic insect yielding to the seduction of space....The difference, however, between the Purist parable and that of the mimeticist is that Ozenfant's primal spatiality is itself always already formed. Its 'mould' is the grid of an abstract geometry such that when matter leaches into it, it flows into the meshes of *form.* Thus the visual and the formal are the same, and it is the revelation of this similitude that is the genius of art....When Ozenfant invokes the idea of foundations he is reaching toward a condition of possibility for vision itself. This he finds in the notion that even before the separation of figure from ground, the ground has always already been figure."

[27]Salvador Dalí, *Dali on Modern Art: The Cuckolds of Antiquated Modern Art* (New York: The Dial Press, 1957), 8-9. A book in Dalí's personal library called *La visió Artistica I Religiosa d'en Gaudi* by Francise Pujols (Barcelona: Llibreria Catalonia, 1927) has a long complimentary dedication to Dalí from Pujols which mentions Picasso. In the margins of page 39 Dalí made pencil sketches of simple arches, boxes and the horizon line of a landscape.

[28]Haim Finkelstein, *Salvador Dalí's Art and Writing 1927-1942: The Metamorphoses of Narcissus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 225.

[29]William H. Rubin, *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage*, An exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, New York: March 27-June 9, 1968 (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968), 77.

[30]Ibid., 80.

[31]Giorgio de Chirico, "Meditations of a Painter," 1912. Manuscript in the collection of Jean Paulham. This translation from *Giorgio de Chirico* by James Thrall Soby, 1955, reprinted in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968) 397-8. Translation by Louise Bourgeois and Robert Goldwater. For a discussion of this text by de Chirico and his pictorial space as "a structure characteristic of deferred action in primal fantasy" see Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993), 62-63.

[32]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 317-8.

[33]Dawn Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982), 12.

[34]Jay, *Downcast eyes,* 245.

[35]Lubar, "Objects of Desire: Dalí, Vermeer, and the 'Phallic Ghost'" (Unpublished manuscript of paper given at the Dalí Colloquium, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí in Figueres, Spain, September 18, 1996), 1.

[36]Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), xx.

[37]Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* 61.

[38]Ibid., 132-3 citing Alpers, 43-44.

[39]One of the Gowan's Art Books in Dalí's library is No. 46, *The Masterpieces of DeHooch and Vermeer.* In addition to the Gowan's book, Dalí owned Eduard Plietzsch's *Vermeer of Delft* (Leipzig: Verlag von Karl W. Hiersemann, 1911); Marcel Proust's *Pages sur Vermeer* (Librairie Gallimard, 1952); and Jan *Vermeer: The Paintings Complete Edition* (New York: Garden City Books, 1958). The form, structure and iconography of the drawings in Gowan's *The Masterpieces of DeHooch and Vermeer* suggest the paintings by DeHooch had a strong influence Dalí. Plate #41, *Lady and Cook*, for example, represents a side view of a young woman pouring from a bucket, which Dalí may have elided into the head of a woman/jug which we look at in Chapter Three. There are also unidentifiable objects littering the tile floor in DeHooch's *Girl with Two Cavaliers* that may be a prototype for the odd shapes in Dalí's *Inaugural Goose Flesh (Surrealist Composition)* of 1928 and other paintings of this period. In DeHooch's scenes in a courtyard there are stairs and paths to nowhere, blackened windows in walls and towers in the background that relate to Dalí's visual vocabulary of the late 1920s and 1930s.

[40]Salvador Dalí, "Photography, Pure Creation of the Mind," *L'Amic de les Arts* no. 18 (September 30, 1927). Reprinted in *Oui--The Paranoid-Critical Revolution: Writings 1927-1933,* ed. by Robert Descharnes, trans. with notes by Yvonne Shafir (Boston: Exact Change, 1998), 12-14. Shafir notes Dalí's "somewhat disparaging" tone toward "subconscious processes" in this essay. As he becomes more closely affiliated with the surrealists in Paris, she rightly notes "he will attempt to reconcile the 'probity' or clarity of the photographic image with the forces of the unconscious."

[41]Lubar, "Objects of Desire," 7.

[42]Ibid., 14.

[43]Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *Baroque Reason: The Aesthetics of Modernity,* trans. by Patrick Camiller (London: SAGE Publications, 1994) citing Quevedo's *Suenos: El mundo por de dentro [The World from Within],* 39.

[44]Salvador Dalí, "New Limits of Painting," *Oui,* pp. 33, 165. Maurice Raynal (1894-1954) is the author of *History of Modern Painting from Picasso to Surrealism.*

[45]Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* 48.

[46]Salvador Dalí, "Apparitions aérodynamiques des 'êtres-objets,'" *Minotaure* (Paris) 6 (Winter 1934-35): 33-34 and "The New Colors of Spectral Sex-Appeal," translated in *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí,* ed. Haim Finkelstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 201-207. The text originally appeared as "Les Nouvelles couleurs du sex appeal spectral," *Minotaure* (Paris) 5 (February 1934): 20-22 and "The Latest Modes of Intellectual Stimulation for the Summer of 1934," *Documents 34* (Paris) new series I (June 1934): 33-35. The text was originally published as "Dernières modes d'excitation intéllectuelle pour l'été 1934." Quoted in Robert S. Lubar, *Dalí: The Salvador Dalí Museum Collection* (Boston: A Bulfinch Press Book, 2000), 83.

[47]Peter C. Sutton, "Artificial Magic," *Dalí's Optical Illusions,* 30.

[48]Ibid., 37.

[49]Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions," 23.

[50]Ibid., 17.

[51]Lubar "Objects of Desire," 24.

[52]Salvador Dalí, *Hidden Faces,* 32. An example of Dalí's influence on contemporary artists may be found in the Sèvres China designed by Cindy Sherman which replaces the faces of royalty with her own image.

[53]Mary Ann Caws, *The Art of Interference: Stressed Readings in Verbal & Visual Texts,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 95.

[54]Ibid., 91.

[55]Dalí, *Hidden Faces*, 23.

[56]Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions," 25-26.

[57]Mary Ann Caws, *The Surrealist Look: An Erotics of Encounter* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1997), 4.

Chapter 2

Regarding Strategies

i.

The psychoanalytic concept of paranoia conditioned Dalí's art in diverse ways. He addressed its usefulness directly and indirectly in his writings. Key moments in his development of this theory will be identified and re-considered in this chapter. The purpose of my analysis is double: to shed light on how Dalí's paranoiac thinking conditions his contribution to the history of modern art, and to suggest reasons for mainstream modernism's categorical exclusion of him. André Breton's surrealist writings, Dalí's dissatisfaction with the passive nature of automatism, and contemporary psychoanalytic texts on paranoia—especially those of Freud and Lacan—contributed to Dalí's formulation of his own artmaking strategy: the paranoiac-critical method. This method aims to address the mind's awareness of its role in ordering what comes to it through the senses and raises questions concerning the territory between fiction and truth and production and organization. The paintings themselves prove that paranoiac thinking in Dalí's art practice is most interesting when it is present implicitly. To illustrate this, in Chapter Three we will look at paintings which rely on paranoiac thought processes and those that depend for their meaning on a

theoretical understanding of the paranoiac-critical method.

In a small book published in 1935 aptly titled *The Conquest of the Irrational,* Dalí historicized and defined his approach to artmaking. In the first paragraph, he reveals that paranoiac-critical activity is a two step process: the making of paranoid associations by the viewer which suggest an interpretation based on the viewer's critical associations. As Dalí wrote:

> It was in 1929 that Salvador Dalí fixed his attention on the internal mechanisms of paranoiac phenomena, envisioning the possibility of an experimental method based on the unexpected power of those systematic associations peculiar to paranoia; this method subsequently became the delirious-critical synthesis which bears the name "paranoiac-critical activity." Paranoia: delirium of interpretative association permitting a systematic structure. Paranoiac-critical activity: spontaneous method of irrational understanding based upon the interpretative critical association of delirious phenomena.[1]

In the next paragraph, Dalí insisted on the active and systematic nature of paranoid thinking. Moreover, he hinted at the relationship of his method to photography by claiming that the critical activity of the paranoiac-critical method spontaneously captures the delirious associations of the viewer like developing fluid objectifies the reality of one instant in time:

> The presence of the active and systematic elements peculiar to paranoia ensures the evolutionary and productive character peculiar to paranoiac-critical activity. The presence of active and systematic elements does not imply the idea of voluntarily directed thinking, nor of any intellectual compromise, for, as we know, in paranoia the active and systematic structure is consubstantial with the delirious phenomenon itself—every delirious phenomenon of a paranoiac nature, even if instantaneous and unexpected, already comprises the

> systematic structure "in full" and only objectivizes itself *a posteriori* by critical intervention. Critical activity intervenes uniquely as a developing fluid for systematic and serious images, associations, conjunctions and niceties already extant at the moment when delirious instantaneity is produced, which is momentarily, at this degree of tangible reality, the only thing that paranoiac-critical activity allows to be brought back to objective light.[2]

He then distinguished paranoiac-critical activity from other surrealist methods of objectifying the chance encounter:

> Paranoiac-critical activity is an organizational and productive force of objective chance. Paranoiac-critical activity no longer deals with surrealist phenomena and images in isolation, but rather considers them in a coherent unity of systematic and significant relationships. In contrast to the passive, disinterested, contemplative and aesthetic attitude to irrational phenomena, there is the active, systematic, organizational, cognizant attitude to irrational phenomena considered as associative, partial and significant events in the authentic domain of our immediate and practical experience of life.[3]

Finally, he gave an example of the kinds of multiple meanings which may result from a single image, and notes that viewers should not expect to agree on a single meaning because paranoiac capacity varies:

> Paranoiac phenomena: the well-known images of double figuration—can be theoretically and practically multiplied—all depend on the paranoiac capacity of the author. The basis of associative mechanisms and the renewal of obsessive ideas permits, as is the case in a painting by Salvador Dalí, the representation of six simultaneous images without any one of them undergoing the least figurative deformation—athlete's torso, lion's head, general's head, horse, bust of a shepherdess, death's head. Different viewers see different images in this picture; it goes without saying that the treatment is scrupulously realistic.[4]

To further situate Dalí's aesthetic use of paranoia, I will briefly characterize its place in the history of mental illness. The word derives from Greek roots meaning "mind beside itself." The ancient Greeks first used it to characterize a wide range of mental disturbances. During the eighteenth century, the meaning narrowed somewhat to disorders involving delusions, eventually more precisely describing fantasies of grandeur and persecution. Today paranoia refers to a malfunction of the ability to assign meanings and maintain subject-object boundaries, accompanied by fiercely-held irrational suspicions about persons and events. In general, paranoid delusions are systematic, logical and well-organized. Paranoiacs construct meanings by fitting together chains of unconnected facts to create false but unshakable beliefs. They arbitrarily reshape the past into an elaborate and coherent system that fits their distortions and accords with their own dominant interests and concerns.

ii.

By insisting on the eminence of Dalí's paranoid imagery, I aim to substantiate his role in the counterhistory of modernism. Rosalind Krauss laid the groundwork for my study. "Whatever the beginning [of an alternative history of modernism] might be," she specified in *The Optical Unconscious*:

> ...the terrain of this counterhistory soon became guideposted with various conceptual markers...The terrain broadened into

> the 1920s and '30s, with players like Giacometti, and Dalí, and Man Ray, and Bellmer. The theorists...were Bataille and Breton, Caillois, and Leiris, with, in the background, Freud. And in the foreground, Dalí linked through one arm and Caillois through the other, there was Jacques Lacan.[5]

My discussion of Dalí's position within modernism's counterhistory—which I believe depends on his paranoiac-critical method—begins with his connection to the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, whose work on paranoia Dalí saw as an endorsement of his own ideas. Lacan asked for an appointment to visit the artist in his Paris studio. According to Dalí, they talked for hours with few points of disagreement. Here is Dalí's detailed recounting of the meeting:

> One day in Paris I received a telephone call from a brilliant young psychiatrist. He had just read an article of mine in the review *Le Minotaure* on "The Inner Mechanism of Paranoiac Activity." He congratulated me and expressed his astonishment at the accuracy of my scientific knowledge of this subject, which was so generally misunderstood. He wished to see me to talk over this whole question. We agreed to meet late that very afternoon in my studio on Rue Gauguet. I spent the whole afternoon in a state of extreme agitation at the prospect of our interview, and I tried to plan in advance the course of our conversation. My ideas were so often regarded even by my closest friends in the surrealist group as paradoxical whims—tinged with genius, to be sure—that I was flattered finally to be considered seriously in strictly scientific circles. Hence I was anxious that everything about our first exchange of ideas should be perfectly normal and serious. While waiting for the young psychiatrist's arrival I continued working from memory on the portrait of the Vicomtesse de Noailles on which I was then engaged. This painting was executed directly on copper. The highly burnished metal cast mirror-like reflects which made it difficult for me to see my drawing clearly. I noticed as I had before that it was easier to see what I was doing where the reflections were brightest. At once I stuck a piece of white paper half an inch square on the end of my nose. Its reflection

made perfectly visible the drawing of the parts on which I was working.

At six o'clock sharp...the doorbell rang. I hurriedly put away my copper, Jacques Lacan entered, and we immediately launched into a highly technical discussion. We were surprised to discover that our views were equally opposed, and for the same reasons, to the constitutionalist theories then almost unanimously accepted. We conversed for two hours in a constant dialectical tumult. He left with the promise that we would keep in constant touch with each other and meet periodically. After he had gone I paced up and down my studio, trying to reconstruct the course of our conversation and to weigh more objectively the points on which our rare disagreements might have a real significance. But I grew increasingly puzzled over the rather alarming manner in which the young psychiatrist had scrutinized my face from time to time. It was almost as if the germ of a strange, curious smile would then pierce through his expression....

I found the answer to the enigma when I presently went to wash my hands (this, incidentally is the moment when one usually sees every kind of question with the greatest lucidity). But this time the answer was given me by my image in the mirror. I had forgotten to remove the square of white paper from the tip of my nose! For two hours I had discussed questions of the most transcendental nature in the most precise, objective and grave tone of voice without being aware of the disconcerting adornment of my nose. What cynic could consciously have played this role through to the end?[6]

Lacan's version of the encounter differs somewhat from Dalí's. In her comprehensive biography of Lacan, Elizabeth Roudinesco wrote that he:

...telephoned Salvador Dalí to discuss with him a text the latter had just published under the eloquent title *L'ane pourri* ["The rotten donkey"]. The painter agreed to meet with him and received the psychiatrist in his home. As a provocation, he wore an adhesive plaster on his nose and expected a surprised reaction from his visitor. Lacan did not flinch, and the two spoke together of Dalí's thought. Upon reading *L'ane pourri*, Lacan realized that the phase of automatic writing had already passed, and that Dalí was giving Surrealism its second wind with his notion of "paranoia-criticism." This consisted, in the wake of automatism, of delivering a final blow to the world of

> reality. For Dalí paranoia was the equivalent of a hallucination, since it consisted in delusional interpretation of reality, but it was also the opposite of a hallucination, since it sustained itself through a coherent critical method, possessing meanings and a phenomenological dimension.[7]

The potential for a paranoid interpretation of Lacan's account will not be developed here. What is important for the purposes of this dissertation is that Dalí's formulation of his paraoiac-critical method and Lacan's publication of his work on paranoia are contemporaneous. Two years after his meeting with Dalí, Lacan defended and published his thesis called *On Paranoiac Psychosis in its Relations with Personality*, a paradigmatic study of self-punishing paranoia, and an epoch-making case in the history of psychiatry. In this and later works, following Freud, Lacan linked erotomania and homosexuality to the structure of paranoia. His thesis described the events surrounding the incarceration of Aimée, a paranoid patient, at Saint-Anne's hospital. In her discussion of the case of Aimée, Roudinesco elaborated on the connection between Lacan and Dalí:

> Lacan demonstrated that in [Aimée's] case, erotomania went hand in hand with a homosexual dimension. Aimée became attached to famous women because they represented her *ego ideal*. Moreover, she was smitten with the Prince of Wales. That passion allowed her to satisfy her limited inclination toward heterosexuality while permitting her to misperceive her suppressed drives toward her own sex. Thus did her delusion receive a "Dalian" or "Lacanian" meaning, taken to be an interpretative activity of the unconscious, as opposed to dreams, which received their interpretation from without. In other words, Aimée may have been insane, but her insanity, or her paranoia, functioned in a register that was not alien to the logical universe of creators, builders of empires, or theoreticians of psychiatry.[8]

Further, Dalí's paranoid-critical method encompasses another Lacanian concern: the essential elusiveness of truth. Lacan succinctly articulated the dilemma in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*:

> All I can do is tell the truth. No, that isn't so--I have missed it. There is no truth that, in passing through awareness, does not lie. But one runs after it all the same.[9]

If there is a unifying theme in Dalí's surrealist oeuvre, it is that there is no single truth or meaning to be discovered in his paintings because to him truth is always inescapably subjective—a matter of perspective. His exploration of paranoid thinking encouraged him to structure his art as a series of multiplicities, flows, suggestive arrangements and connections. What distinguishes Dalí's method from other surrealist strategies was his insistence on the subject's active engagement with external reality. His visual art and writings of the late 1920s through the 1930s reflect his preoccupation with the paranoiac's ability to arbitrarily reshape the past and present into an elaborate, coherent and at times visionary system that fits her or his own distortions. In *The Conquest of the Irrational*, Dalí described this phenomenon as he related it to realism in painting:

> The pictorial means of expression are concentrated on the subject. The illusionism of the most abjectly *arriviste* and irresistible mimetic art, the clever tricks of a paralyzing foreshortening, the most analytically narrative and discredited academicism, can become sublime hierarchies of thought when combined with new exactness of concrete irrationality as the images of concrete irrationality approach the phenomenal Real, the corresponding means of expression approach those of great realist painting—Velasquez and Vermeer de Delft—to paint

> realistically in accordance with irrational thinking and the unknown imagination.[10]

This passage suggests yet another fundamental link between Dalí and Lacan. Their genius, as Roudinesco claimed for Lacan, "lay less in an ability to forge a new mode of knowledge, than in a capacity to join together, in a subtle exercise in what Lévi-Strauss was to call *bricolage*, the essence of the knowledge of an era."[11] Dalí's inclusive approach to making art placed him outside the parameters of mainstream modernism's preference for abstraction and transcendence. Instead, the very structure of Dalí's paintings encouraged the engagement of the viewer's memories and personality and highlighted the inevitable confrontation between private drama and social milieu.

iii.

Apart from his artistic predecessors, the single most significant influence on Dalí was Freud. Stefan Zweig arranged for the two to meet on July 19, 1938, when Freud was in exile in London. Dalí took with him his painting, *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus* [Fig. 23]. Ades recounts and interprets Dalí's version of the meeting:

> According to Dalí, Freud told him: 'It is not the unconscious I seek in your pictures, but the conscious. While in the pictures of the masters—Leonardo or Ingres—that which interests me, that which seems mysterious and troubling to me, is precisely the search for unconscious ideas of an enigmatic order hidden in

> the picture, your mystery is manifested outright. The picture is but a mechanism to reveal it.' Dalí's paintings, he is suggesting, contain both the latent cause of an obsession and its symbolic manifestation. The unconscious idea, obsession, which was for Freud so often of a sexual nature, which may exist hidden in, say, a Leonardo, has for Dalí become the open subject of the painting—provided of course one is familiar enough with the terminology of sexual symbolism from the psychology textbooks.[12]

The comments of Edward James, who was also present at the meeting, help us visualize Freud's reaction to Dalí:

> Dr. Sigmund Freud, aged 82, is adorable. He is full of sparkle though a little baffled at moments by having newly become a bit deaf. He talked to me for a long while, during which Dalí sketched him hastily but accurately into a drawing book. Salvador was looking so inspired, his eyes were so blazing with excitement while he sketched the inventor of psychoanalysis, that the old man whispered in German... `That boy looks like a fanatic. Small wonder that they have civil war in Spain if they look like that.'[13]

According to Dalí's biographer, Ian Gibson, Dalí "was to rejoice in [Freud's comment about his fanaticism] for the rest of his life."[14]

When Dalí first became familiar with Freud's work on paranoia, it was linked to a form of repressed love rooted in homosexual feelings for the same sex parent. According to Freud, whose ideas on paranoia Dalí ardently embraced, during times of crisis, these feelings emerge from the unconscious as projections of the paranoiac's unacknowledged wishes and impulses.[15]

Freud's analysis of the case of the German jurist Daniel Paul Schreber, based on Schreber's autobiography *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903), established the link between paranoia and homosexuality. "[T]he familiar

principal forms of paranoia," wrote Freud "can all be represented as contradictions of the single proposition: *I* (a man) *love him* (a man)."[16] Freud claimed that the paranoiac's passive repressed desire is transformed prior to its reaching consciousness: a husband's desire for another man, for example, is converted into the delusion that his wife loves that man. In his analysis of Schreber's illness, Freud specified the part played by repressed desire in the development of Schreber's paranoia. Schreber believed that God had chosen him to redeem the world and restore it to a lost state of bliss. According to Schreber's delusion, to accomplish his mission, he had to be transformed from a man into a woman and inseminated by God. Freud concluded Schreber's paranoid delusions were a defense against admission of his desire. "The exciting cause of his illness," wrote Freud, "was an outburst of homosexual libido...and his struggles against this libidinal impulse produced the conflict which gave rise to the pathological phenomena."[17]

From the specifics of the Schreber case and his clinical practice, Freud generalized a primary state of narcissism in which one's own body is the first love object followed by the choice of some other person. Since, at this developmental stage, the point of central self-interest is the genitals, the subject chooses a love-object of the same sex. In normal development, wrote Freud, homosexual love becomes a step on the way to heterosexual love. If the child lingers too long in the narcissistic phase, however, features of this condition can carry into later developmental stages or, in times of

stress, as in the case of Schreber, narcissistic regression can occur. His analysis of Schreber's autobiography and his clinical practice led Freud to conclude that the only sex object of the paranoiac is her or his own ego.

Paranoid personalities see references to themselves everywhere. Social humiliations and slights, according to Freud, are the "strikingly prominent features in the causation of paranoia."[18] The motive of a paranoid delusion may be to clarify reasons for failure, to enable the continuation of some gratification through retreat into fantasy, or to defend against the panic that often comes when boundaries vanish and leave the individual prey to threatening intrusions or loss of self.[19] The paranoiac construction may be considered a strategy designed to evade rational conclusions. This process depends on the person's use of projection, which occurs when "[a]n internal perception is suppressed and its content, after undergoing a degree of distortion, enters consciousness in the form of an external perception."[20] Viewed from a Freudian perspective, paranoid thinking provided Dalí with a vehicle for externalizing (or in Dalí's words "making concrete") the content of unconscious perceptions or feelings. His paranoid thinking gave Dalí access to self-centered fantasies—such as the fusion of self and other, cannibalistic impulses concerning orifices and genitals, notions of being of the opposite sex—which he represented in the content, form and structure of his paintings.[21]

In his study, *The Apocryphal Subject: Masochism, Identification, and*

Paranoia in Salvador Dalí's Autobiographical Writings (1995) David Vilaseca compared his approach to Dalí to Freud's approach to Schreber. Freud did not base this influential paper on actual analysis of Schreber, which was his normal procedure; instead he used Schreber's book, *Memoirs of my Nervous Illness* (1903). To account for his reliance on Dalí's autobiographical texts, Vilaseca cited Freud's belief that unlike other types of patients, paranoiacs chose their words with care and "...possess the peculiarity of betraying (in a distorted form, it is true) precisely those things which other neurotics keep hidden as a secret."[22] In *Moses and Monotheism,* Freud argued that even the texts of "normal" subjects are distorted and convey unintended meanings because the subject himself is always divided by the desiring unconscious. As a result, without ever claiming that Dalí suffered from paranoid psychosis (because, according to Freud, it is not only the paranoiac whose texts make unintended revelations) Vilaseca could refer to Dalí's autobiographical writings as "this showplace of unconscious distortion" where "the subject is no longer master of his language or his fantasmatic movements, but rather *subjected* to them."[23]

Vilaseca took as his subject Dalí the public persona, the fictional construction presented in his autobiographical texts. No attempt is made by Vilaseca to uncover the "real" Dalí behind the masks or to get to an understanding of the artist's lived experiences. Instead Vilaseca meticulously explored what he described as Dalí's cross-gender identifications, i.e., his

lack of singular identification with either masculine or feminine roles. According to Vilaseca, what set Dalí apart from his contemporaries is Dalí's critique of essentialist gender categories enforced by patriarchal institutions and culture. Moreover, Vilaseca expressed disdain for Dalí commentators who have used the artist as an alibi for their own totalizing and coherent world-view. Vilaseca's thesis is that sexual ambivalence drove Dalí's artmaking: a conclusion that may stem more from an eagerness to focus on gender issues than to plumb the manifold meanings in Dalí's oeuvre. One way in which Vilaseca's work does in fact succeed and differs from his predecessors is his articulation of the repetitions, contradictions and gaps that occur in Dalí's texts. Vilaseca sees this syntax as more revelatory than what is stated directly by Dalí.

Vilaseca's interpretation relies heavily on Julia Kristeva's description of "the abject" as presented in *Powers of Horror* (1982)[24]. Following Kristeva, he takes a semantic approach to finding meaning in Dalí's visual art production. Vilaseca argues that the tension generated by Dali's need, on one hand, for subjective independence and unity and, on the other hand, objective mastery and control caused him to project outside himself everything loathsome and terrifying. The abject is a (non)object projected by the subject to maintain the illusion of a coherent self. Vilaseca's argument depends on his use of Kristeva's abject theory to make a connection between Dalí's body functions and his symbolic representations through the

mechanism of abjection. To accomplish his goal, Vilaseca described and explored how Dalí tried to establish and preserve a state of consciousness that was narcissistically pure. However, after noting Dalí's failed attempts to accomplish such a refined state, Vilaseca argued that Dalí's subjectivity became dependent on fantasmatic identifications. Dalí's texts and art, according to Vilaseca, reflect the humanist conception of and aim for transcendental subjectivity giving way to a provisional ex-centric, shifting subject. In other words, in the end Dalí's drive toward what is peripheral and ex-centric caused him to masochistically sacrifice the illusion of unity, self-satisfaction and presence. Moreover, this drive toward peripheral shifting and ex-centric identifications produced a pleasure-generating disturbance of psychic organization.

At this point in his argument, Vilaseca turned to Leo Bersani's theory of masochistic desire. Vilaseca claimed that primary masochism triggered Dalí's desire, and grounded his very ability to represent [in his texts] desire's self-shattering nature. Here is an example of how Vilaseca elaborated on Bersani's theory of desire:

> Desire constantly shifts in Bersani from one representation to another, constantly detaches itself from its objects and images in an endless attempt 'to replace the emptiness in even the most ecstatic fantasy by the (imaginary) plenitude of satisfaction' (Bersani 1977, 86). These substitutory images and representations, I wish to emphasize, are not secondary with regard to a presumed original point of satisfaction and subjective full-presence. Desire does not have an origin in relation to which its multiple representations are but substitutions, 'dangerous' *suppléments* in the Derridean sense.

> On the contrary, as in Lacan, the Bersanian conception of desire results in a total subversion of hierarchical opposition such as original vs. representation and center vs. periphery. Desire "produces in fantasy more 'objects'...than the world could ever be shown to have been provided with in any 'real' past or present," Bersani writes (1977, 86). Desire, for Bersani, exists nowhere except in its multiple, excessive representations and substitutions; its inside (its presumed origin) is its outside; its center is nothing other than its periphery.[25]

Vilaseca looked to Bersani for his theory of subjectivity as inherently masochistic. Since the subject's goal is the satisfaction of all desires, then ultimate mastery would mean the end of all demands, a state that is equivalent to death. From this standpoint, Dalí cultivated psychic disorganization because pleasure (the life force) derives from destabilization: to master desire would mean to kill the self.

Vilaseca focused on the places in Dalí's texts where widely-accepted categories lose their authority and give way to a play of endless substitution. This thwarts achievement of the narcissistic illusion of coherence and unity. Vilaseca gives three examples taken from Dali's texts to shed light on his construction of subjectivity. Each of Vilaseca's examples concerns an object seen by Dalí (and later reported on in an autobiographical text) that threatens his cohesive self-image and agency.

The first incident is a childhood memory of Dali's discovery that his pet hedgehog is dead and in a state of advanced decay. The tone of the artist's description of his stunning discovery is a remarkable blend of eroticism, death and the unsettling power of visual penetration. He chooses

words such as "morbid voluptuousness" to describe a fist-size mass of frenzied worms throbbing inside the abdomen of the dead hedgehog."[26] The language Dalí chose to describe his feelings about finding his dead pet in a state of decay flagrantly suggests the way one would describe a sexual encounter. He feels "an extreme feebleness" in his legs, and "delicate cold shudders" that rise upward along his spine and spread in orgasmic fashion through his whole body "like a veritable burst of fireworks."

The second incident cited in Dalí's autobiography that Vilaseca asserted smacks of abjection concerns a tick found by Dalí in his Paris hotel room immediately prior to falling asleep. According to Dalí, the next morning when he remembered seeing the terrifying insect right before he fell asleep, he realized that it must still be in his room. Frantically he searched for the threatening creature. He painstakingly checked everything in the room including his own body. As a last resort, he used a mirror to examine his back. There he located a raised dark round spot which he took to be the tick. The idea that the tick had penetrated his flesh caused him to panic. First he used his thumb and forefinger like pincers to remove the tick, which he believed had firmly established itself in his flesh. When that failed, he took a sharp blade and masochistically slid it between the dark spot and his skin. Blood covered the room before he realized the alleged tick was a birthmark!

The third incident cited by Vilaseca also takes place in a hotel room.

During the Spanish Civil War, Dalí and Gala, fearful of returning to Spain, took up residency in the Alps. His terror of having to return to war-torn Spain incited a bout of hypochondria. Caught in the irrational episode, he mistook for mucus a glob of dried glue in the bathroom. The apparent mucus so deeply disturbed him he attempted to use his fingernail to scratch it from the wall. The needle-shaped hard glue lodged itself between Dalí's nail and the soft flesh of his finger. He became terrified of infection, amputation and even death from the convulsions of tetanus.

Vilaseca's analysis of these three incidents led him to conclude that in each case, seeing (a wriggling mass of worms a tick, mucus) combined with a lack of boundaries (the worms are wriggling inside the decomposing hedgehog, there is no separation between the mole and his back, the painter's glue lodges between his fingernail and flesh). To interpret the significance of the three scenes cited above, Vilaseca turned to the theories of Kristeva and Bersani mentioned above and to Shoshana Felman, who in her work on Lacan has argued that with understanding comes a blind spot, a point beyond which vision is denied.[27] Following Kristeva, Vilaseca concluded that each scene presents a challenge to Dalí's narcissistic fantasy of an all-embracing coherence. Bersani's work led Vilaseca to claim that these fascinating scenes of horror and disgust captivate Dalí because of the masochistic pleasure he derives from the psychic disturbance they cause. Felman's theory supported Vilaseca's conclusion that the three incidents he

cited from Dalí's autobiography illustrate that mastery of meaning inevitably carries with it a paradoxical mingling of understanding and not understanding. I have elaborated on Vilaseca's study and its theoretical foundation because it makes an important contribution to the Dalí scholarship. The strength in Vilaseca's interpretation is his identification of Dalí's interest in the place where form and space lose their identifiability, where difference gives way to endless substitution, where categories lose their authority. It would have been more convincing, however, if he had considered Georges Bataille's vital essay on Dalí's painting, *Le Jeu lugubre* [Fig. 24], which links the structure of the painting to Bataille's theory of the *informe*. Vilaseca's interpretation misses the essential goal of declassification built into the very structure of Dalí's paintings. The value of interpreting Dalí in light of the *informe* will be pursued in the last section of this chapter.

iv.

André Breton's *First Surrealist Manifesto* (1924) was a revolutionary text. It argued above all for freedom and nonconformism, which participants could attain first by automatism, then by focusing on dreams and the unconscious. Moreover, it synthesized psychological discoveries and methods for achieving poetic thought. In *The First Surrealist Manifesto*, Breton defined the movement:

> Surrealism. noun, masculine—Pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express, verbally, in writing or by other means, the real functioning of thought. The dictation of thought, in the absence of all control exercised by reason, and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations.
>
> Encycl. *Philos.* Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association heretofore neglected, in the omnipotence of dreams in the undirected play of thought....[28]

The surrealist Manifesto set the stage for what William S. Rubin would call surrealism's "heroic period" between 1924 and 1929.[29] The text endorsed Freud's theories, especially those found in his *Interpretation of Dreams*, and challenged bourgeois ideological assumptions and aesthetic realism.

In "Reality and Surreality," published in *La Gaceta Literaria* (Madrid) in 1928, Dalí specified automatism's contribution to the instantaneous appreciation of reality. He noted Breton's claim that "surreality could be contained in reality and vice versa."[30] The essay also set up a hierarchical distinction between the passive state of automatism and imaginative invention, which would condition Dalí's formulation of the paranoiac-critical method. Dalí revered a genuinely passive state of mind, one that is absent of control. He placed it in opposition to imagination, which for him produces stereotyped and anti-real representations insofar as imaginative images are formed by intellect "falsified and nullified by poetic reason."[31] In addition to his consideration of automatism as an artmaking strategy, he asserted that photography can give access to the permeable border between reality and surreality. Dalí, who had not yet met Breton or joined the surrealist circle,

had grasped early on the photographic medium's potential for surrealist expression.[32]

Dalí found alternative representational techniques in diverse sources. In "Photography: Pure Creation of the Mind," published in *L'Amic de les Arts* in 1927 he advocated the camera as a means to see with "pure objectivity." He called for his readers to look outward with the "pure crystalline objectivity of the glass"—the camera lens. In comparison, he found fault with automatism because he believed looking inward gave the intellect an opportunity to impose convention on imagery that otherwise would be new. In this early essay, Dalí elevates active engagement with the "objective" world over introspective states:

> Let us be content with the immediate miracle of opening our eyes and being adept in the apprenticeship of looking properly. Closing your eyes is an anti-poetic way of perceiving resonances."[33]

Dalí equated looking with inventing and recommended the mechanical eye of the camera as a way to really see:

> Knowing how to look is a means of inventing. And no invention has been as pure as that created by the anesthetic gaze of the naked, lashless eye of Zeiss [a reference to a lens manufacturer]
>
> The camera has immediate practical possibilities, while painting must remain within experience and comprehension. Photography slides with continual imagination over new events which can only hope to be signs in the pictorial realm.
>
> The photographic lens can caress the cold delicacy of white toilets; follow the languid slowness of aquaria; analyze the most subtle articulations of electrical apparatuses with all the unreal precision of its own magic. In painting, on the other hand, if

> you want to paint a jellyfish, it is absolutely necessary to portray a guitar or a harlequin playing the clarinet.[34]

In "Photographic Data (1929)," Dalí described how photography was beginning to play a more important role in a variety of disciplines including scientific works and novels:

> The photograph is capable of realizing the most complete, scrupulous and moving catalogue that man has ever been able to imagine. From the subtlety of aquaria to the fastest, most fleeting gestures of wild animals, the photograph affords us a thousand fragmentary images culminating in a dramatized cognitive totalization. The spire of a Cathedral, at a height of ten meters from the ground, in constant darkness, is revealed to us by the photograph with that very fineness of detail, made possible only by the skillful photogenic quality to which the photographer can subject things, by which he enables us, finally, to know them. In addition to the implacable rigor to which photographic data subject our mind, they are always and ESSENTIALLY THE SUREST VEHICLE OF POETRY and the most agile process for perceiving the most delicate osmoses that are established between reality and surreality.
>
> The mere fact of the photographic transposition already implies a total invention: the registering of an UNKNOWN REALITY. Nothing has come to prove Surrealism more correct than photography. Oh Zeiss, lens so full of uncommon faculties of surprise![35]

In "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," Krauss expanded the terms of discussion of surrealist painting from the "twin poles"--automatism and dream—established by Breton and reinforced by Rubin. She claimed that "stylistic concepts derived from the formal, pictorial code—distinctions such as linear/painterly or representation/abstract" could not alone define surrealist art. Instead, she suggested:

> ...the possibility that it is within the photographic rather than

> the pictorial code that such a definition is to be found—that is, that issues of surrealist heterogeneity will be resolved around the semiological functions of photography rather than the formal properties operating the traditional art-historical classifications of style. What is at stake, then, is the relocation of photography from its eccentric position relative to surrealism to one that is absolutely central—definitive, one might say.[36]

Krauss noted that the "special access that photography has to [the experience of reality transformed into representation] is its privileged connection to the real." Moreover, this "experience of *reality as representation*" lies at the very heart of surrealist thinking.[37] The "eyes" of the camera, she elaborated:

> ...see faster, sharper, at stranger angles, closer-to, microscopically, with a transposition of tonalities, with the penetration of X ray, and with access to the multiplication of images that makes possible the writing of association and memory. Camera-seeing is thus an extraordinary extension of normal vision, one that supplements the deficiencies of the naked eye. The camera covers and arms this nakedness, it acts as a kind of prosthesis, enlarging the capacity of the human body.[38]

Krauss signaled Dalí's importance to her discussion of photography's essential place within surrealism by beginning her catalogue essay, "Corpus Delicti," for the groundbreaking exhibition "L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism," with Dalí's description of "a psycho-atmospheric-anamorphic object," which I will discuss in the next chapter.[39] Following Krauss, Lubar argued that the "photographic medium" and its "proofs of the delirious, irrational structure of reality" was "at the very core of [Dalí's] theory of paranoia-criticism."[40]

On the eve of Dalí's departure for Paris to begin shooting *Un Chien Andalou* with Luis Bunuel, *L'Amic de les Arts* published Dalí's essay, "Review of Anti-Artistic Tendencies."[41] This text confirms Dalí's belief in photography as a documentary process, which proves "the constant osmosis established between reality and surreality." From April 26 and June 28, 1929, the Barcelona newspaper, *La Publicitat*, published a series of six articles written by Dalí while he was in Paris with Bunuel. These theoretical and polemical articles bring surrealist thinking to bear on the *fait-divers* or local news items printed at the time in the daily newspapers in Paris.

The first of these articles, "Documentary—Paris 1929—1," begins by noting the recent departure of the poet Benjamin Péret's to make a documentary film in Brazil. Dalí's story went beyond the typical function of the *fait-divers* by using his social notice of the poet's project to make a case for the similarities between the documentary and surrealist art:

> Some might consider rigorously objective documentary and Surrealist texts to be antagonistic. However, these two activities are both explored with the same passion by the *new sensibility*. In effect, documentary and the Surrealist text coincide from the outset in their essentially anti-artistic and more particularly anti-literary process, since not the slightest of intentions, be they aesthetic, emotional, sentimental, etc.—essential characteristics of the artistic phenomenon—enter into this process. The documentary notes things said of the objective world anti-literarily. In parallel fashion, the Surrealist text transcribes with the same rigor and as anti-literarily as documentary, the REAL free functioning of thought, of events which occur in reality in our mind, thanks to psychic automatism and to other passive states (inspiration).[42]

Moreover, Dalí sets up a sado-masochistic dynamic between the subject and

the world. He concluded "Documentary—Paris 1929—1" by describing the value of representational form to the surrealist project:

> Let us consider documentary, without taking it to be antagonistic to Surrealism, as one more proof of the delicate and constant osmoses which develop between surreality and reality: that reality of the objective world which is increasingly more submissive, more docile and more blurred, all the more able to obey the violent reality of our mind.[43]

"Documentary—Paris 1929—II" is less theoretical than the first. Dalí began by noting current trends in mustaches, tuxedos, and cocktails. He made a literary collage of a diverse selection of news items ranging from the local weather to a wife's fatal strangulation by her postman husband. His awareness that everyday occurrences—when viewed from certain perspectives—can be aesthetically useful led him to conclude that "any kind of rot can always, at any moment, for whoever might want it, procure a subtle poetic image appropriate for the situation. No matter what situation."[44] This observation, which he refers to as "a definition of taste," will condition his surrealist paintings. His "Documentaries" provide us with evidence of how by 1929 he believed he could represent the objective world by documenting its parallels and coincidences.

Breton's novel, *Nadja* profoundly influenced Dalí's "Documentaries." At the time he wrote *Nadja,* Breton was looking for a different method of representing reality apart from the realist novel. Descriptions in traditional novels bored him. He wanted to get away from conventional form—stock plots and stock characters—so that he could convey a sense of spontaneity.

His solution was to take a documentary approach to *Nadja* by giving it the form of a diary. Breton recognized and dismissed the risk of misrepresentation involved in his preference for spontaneity over traditional plot and character organization:

> Actually, it is of little importance if an occasional error or omission, a genuine anomaly or lacuna casts a shadow across my narrative, across what, taken as a whole, cannot be substantiated.[45]

Nadja illustrates Breton's belief that in reality we find signs that will provide clues to our inward nature, which is akin to what Dalí tried to show in his "Documentaries." The "real" gives out signals that when noticed provide us with clues about ourselves. As we will see in his surrealist paintings and theoretical texts, his paranoid thinking depended on this belief that the objective world beamed out signals or patterns of meaning that when catalogued gelled into a coherent system. In 1929 both Breton and Dalí were searching for an approach to representation that would evade formulaic methods that serve to mask rather than reveal reality.

Both men were swayed by Freud's writings on dream interpretation. Dalí claimed that often what matters most in a non-fiction narrative is what is left out. The seemingly insignificant detail will "leave THE MOST VIOLENT AND THE MOST INTENSE impression on our minds." What then, Dalí asked, is the relationship between reality and the realist writer's text?

> Very little. In contrast, above all and almost exclusively, they have to do with his intellectual system, with the complicated and very thick fabric of his prejudices and of aesthetic, moral

and other conventions of all orders and types.[46]

In 1929 Breton was the leading avant-garde intellectual in France if not the world. That year, he staked his claim on Dalí by writing the preface to the exhibition catalogue for Dalí's first one-man show in Paris:

> With the coming of Dalí, it is perhaps the first time that the mental windows have been opened really wide, so that one can feel oneself gliding up towards the wild sky's trap. We are literally snatched up, and the fact is just as grave in the sight of this lion's head, large as anger, or of this mask with a handle to it, which still makes me wonder what it can be (for I am afraid), both of which seem to want to go on turning round indefinitely, without any change of expression, not only within these pictures but also within us--yes, in a kind of interior showcase—and which go on reverberating, to our terror, *in the air*, as though the latter suddenly revealed itself as a mere play of mirrors which it would be sufficient to modify, surely though imperceptibly, for an immense gap to form, in which would appear at last the figures, exorcisable or not, which haunt a second landscape, of the second zone, of whose imminence everything rightly seeks to warn us.[47]

Texts by other surrealists confirm that Dalí's paintings played a significant role in the development of French surrealism. André Thirion, a prominent member of the French Communist Party, who joined the surrealist circle at the same time as Dalí, wrote:

> Dalí's contribution to Surrealism was of immense importance to the life of the group and the evolution of its ideology. Those who have maintained anything to the contrary have either not been telling the truth or have understood nothing at all....Surrealism owes a great deal to his pictures.[48]

In general, though, the communists objected to Dalí's reliance on Freud, who they considered a counter-revolutionary, and to Dalí's "pornographic"

representations. When, for example, Dalí published a detailed description of a masturbatory fantasy in "Reverie," the French Communist Party formed an inspection committee to condemn it.[49]

A few months after Dalí joined the surrealist movement, Breton predicted the equivocal responses that Dalí would provoke:

> Dalí is like a man who hesitates (and whose future will show that he did not hesitate) between talent and genius, or, as one might once have said, between vice and virtue. He is one of those who arrive from so far away that one barely has time to see them enter—only enter. He takes his place, without saying a word, in a system of interferences....
>
> The art of Dalí, the most hallucinatory known until now, constitutes a real menace. Absolutely new and visibly malintentioned beings hereupon enter into play. It is with a sinister joy that we watch them pass by unhindered, and realise, from the way in which they multiply and swoop down, that they are beings of prey.[50]

Dalí's dissatisfaction with the censoring tendencies of members of the surrealist group contributed to his exploration of paranoid thinking as an artmaking strategy. As stated earlier, Freud's theories were integral to Dalí's understanding of paranoia. He first elaborated on the possibilities paranoia offered art in a speech he gave in March 1930 at the Ateneu Club in Barcelona.[51] The content of the speech—called "Moral Position of Surrealism"—confirms his familiarity with Freud's theories as presented in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *Totem and Taboo*. It also reflects the influence of Breton's "Second Surrealist Manifesto," which was published in the final issue of *La Révolution*

Surréaliste. This issue contained the screenplay for *Un Chien Andalou* and reproductions of two Dalí paintings—*The Accommodations of Desire* [Fig. 25] and *Illumined Pleasures* [Fig. 26]—from his one-man show at Goemans Gallery.

"The Moral Position of Surrealism" is a primary source of insight into the formulation of the paranoiac-critical method. We can see in this speech Dalí's alliance with the surrealists in Paris, his familiarity with Freud, his enthusiasm for sado-masochistic images, and his belief in cultivating confusion. The event itself turned into the kind of public display that would help both to make Dalí the best-known surrealist artist and ultimately diminish his reputation in the eyes of serious art professionals. Dalí began by explaining to his listeners how the act of making a public presentation can be turned into an opportunity to create confusion.[52] He reinforced this notion by praising Breton's proposal that the pure surrealist act would be going into the street and firing indiscriminately into the crowd. According to surrealist tenets, this irrational and threatening act would be a way to contribute to the desired destruction of conventional ideas. In the following passage, we see how Dalí was beginning to bring paranoia and multiple imagery together to formulate his paranoid-critical method—his vehicle for evading conventional thinking:

> It is necessary to insist on the extreme perceptiveness, recognized by every psychologist, of paranoia, a form of mental illness which consists in organizing reality in such a way as to make it serve for the control of an imaginative construct. A

> paranoiac who thinks he's been poisoned discovers in everything around him, down to the most imperceptible and subtle details, the preparations for his death. Recently, by a completely paranoiac process, I have obtained the visual image of a woman, the position, shadows and morphology of whom, without altering or deforming in the least her real appearance, are at the same time those of a horse. One imagines that it is only a question of a more violent paranoiac intensity to obtain the apearance of a third image, and a fifth and a thirtieth. In this case it would be interesting to know what it is that the image really represents, which is the truth, and then the question arises as to whether the images we have of reality are in fact a product of our paranoiac faculty.[53]

In the same speech, Dalí elaborated on the role of the viewer's "paranoiac faculty," which has an unstable master/victim component, in determining the significance of images. He takes as one of his models Red Cross nurses who appeared to have given up privileged homes for the battlefields. Dalí raises doubts about our interpretation of seemingly straightforward imagery by claiming that the ostensibly dutiful nurses were sadists who satisfied their need to inflict pain by cutting the flesh of the wounded soldiers. Additionally, proposed Dalí, the nurses may have derived pleasure from the perception others had of their masochistic virtue. In another case cited by Dalí, a loving wife selflessly cared for an ailing husband for two years. Thanks to her tenderness and self-sacrifice, her husband did indeed recover. The value of her altruism is put in question, however, when upon her husband's return to health, she suffered a nervous breakdown.

At the heart of Dalí's Ateneu speech is his belief in truth as grounded in looking from multiple perspectives. The structure, forms and iconology of

Dalí's surrealist paintings not only argue against preconceived notions—which result from formulaic or conventional thinking—they advocate suspicion.

There is a connection between the ideas outlined by Dalí in his Ateneu speech and film-making. The shooting script for *Un Chien Andalou* evidences the victim/anal-sadistic shift:

> Close-up of lecherous hands on her breasts. These emerge from under the jersey. Now one sees an expression of terrible, almost mortal anguish, cross his face. Bloody saliva drools from his mouth onto the naked bosom of the girl.
>
> The breasts disappear to become thighs which the character continues to feel. His expression has changed. His eyes shine with cruelty and lust. His mouth, before wide open, now shuts and becomes minuscule, as if tightened by a sphincter.

Further evidence of a connection between film-making and the development of Dalí's paranoid-critical method is found in a script Dalí wrote with Breton for a five-minute documentary. This script is on permanent loan to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh and has been published with an introduction by Ades.[54] Dalí's commentary references Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and explores the "tension between the pleasure principle (the depths of the mind, dreams, fantasies, etc.) and the reality principle (waking life, logic, practicality, morality, etc.)." Dalí explains "paranoiac delirium" as a normal part of the dream state which can be simulated by images when we are awake. He uses a diagram of his painting *Invisible Sleeping Woman, Horse, Lion* to show how multiple readings of

objects perceived by the conscious mind stimulate unconscious dreams and fantasies. The filmscript is unusually clear for a text by Dalí, probably because of Breton's involvement in the project.

Breton saw automatism as a way to give the unconscious full play and to achieve an expanded awareness of reality by unifying its external and internal components. His surrealist thinking provided a point of departure for Dalí, who flirted with the technique of automatism, but ultimately rejected it as a passive and ineffectual means to evade intellectual reasoning. Although the opening scene of the filmscript featured a young woman in the act of automatic writing, by 1933, Dalí's essay, "Interprétation, paranoiaque-critique de l'image obsédant 'L'Angélus' de Millet," directly questioned its value. In this essay and in *The Conquest of the Irrational*, Dalí's enthusiasm for automatism was giving way to endorsement of a different creative strategy: the productive unknowability of images realized through paranoid thinking.

Under the influence of the seriousness of Breton's *Second Surrealist Manifesto*, Dalí pinpointed paranoiac activity's moral tendency in "L'Ane pourri," published in 1930 in *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution*. In this essay, Dalí identified the paranoiac-critical method as a means to re-create the world by discrediting conventional perceptions of reality:

> I believe that the moment is near when, by a thought process of a paranoiac and active character, it would be possible (simultaneously with automatism and other passive states) to systematize confusion and thus contribute to discrediting

completely the world of reality.[55]

Dalí's early texts on paranoid thinking focused on its image-forming phase; later, the interpretative aspect of the process gained in importance.[56] The method visually relates to his interest in double and multiple imagery as a means to "systematize confusion." He distinguished between hallucination and paranoiac delusion: paranoiac delusions develop into elaborate systems and are usually a response to an obsessive idea that is erotic in nature. They are not the same as "voluntary hallucinations" which are akin to the visions of spiritualists and to the surrealist practice of automatic writing. Paranoiac images are unexplainable, irreducible and uninterpretable, yet they tend toward the real and physical. They differ from representations arrived at through automatism in that they are not virtual and chimerical, and they cannot be psychoanalyzed.[57]

In "What is Surrealism," a lecture given by Breton in Brussels in June of 1934, and published as a pamphlet the same year, he quoted from Guy Mangeot's *History of Surrealism* to describe the wide-ranging contribution of Dalí's paranoiac-critical method to the surrealist movement:

> Dalí has endowed surrealism with an instrument of primary importance, specifically the paranoiac-critical method, which has immediately shown itself capable of being applied with equal success to painting, poetry, the cinema to the construction of typical surrealist objects, to fashions, to sculpture and even, if necessary, to all manner of exegesis.[58]

Given that "What is Surrealism" is recognized as essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the origins, development, and early goals of

surrealism, this testimony to the "primary importance" of Dalí's paranoiac-critical method is telling.

Their initial alliance, however, was short-lived. Breton had an agenda, standards and rules that he tried to impose on the artists in his circle. Meetings were held to judge the behavior of others, and those members whose actions fell outside acceptable parameters were "ex-communicated" from the group. No doubt Breton's standards worked against the essential freedom of the revolutionary agenda he allegedly embraced. In his article, "Le Lion châtré" (The Castrated Lion), Bataille accused Breton of being a priest disguised as a revolutionary.[59]

Dalí accepted Breton's ideological narrowness. In a footnote in *The Secret Life*, Dalí described Breton's reaction to the scatological references in *Le Jeu lugubre,* which Breton first saw in the artist's studio in Cadaqués:

> I, then, and only I was the true surrealist painter, at least according to the definition which its chief, André Breton, gave of surrealism. Nevertheless, when Breton saw this painting he hesitated for a long time before its scatological elements—for in the picture appeared a figure seen from behind whose drawers were bespattered with excrement. The involuntary aspect of this element, so characteristic in psychopathological iconography, should have sufficed to enlighten him. But I was obliged to justify myself by saying that it was merely a simulacrum. No further questions were asked. But had I been pressed I should certainly have had to answer that it was the simulacrum of the excrement itself. This idealistic narrowness was from my point of view the fundamental 'intellectual vice' of the early period of surrealism. Hierarchies were established where there was no need for any. Between the excrement and a piece of rock crystal, by the very fact that they both sprang from the common basis of the unconscious, there could and should be no difference in category. And these were the men

who denied the hierarchies of tradition![60]

Breton's intolerance led him to eventually refer to the disappearance of "the first Dalí" around 1935 and archly coin the prophetic anagram "Avida Dollars" to signal Dalí's avariciousness.[61] Ultimately the political references in Dalí's paintings caused his expulsion from the surrealist circle. Dalí characterized in sado-masochistic terms his decision to represent Hitler in his paintings:

> I was fascinated by Hitler's soft, fleshy back, which was always so tightly strapped into the uniform....Whenever I started to paint the leather strap that crossed from his belt to his shoulder, the softness of that Hitler flesh packed under his military tunic transported me into a sustaining and Wagnerian ecstasy that set my heart pounding, an extremely rare state of excitement that I did not even experience during the act of love.[62]

On February 5, 1934, Breton summoned Dalí to a meeting in which he was to account for his representations of Hitler. When Dalí arrived he claimed to be ill with the flu. He sat through the interrogation wrapped in a scarf with a thermometer in his mouth. When Breton finished with his accusations, Dalí delivered a prepared speech as he performed a modified strip-tease by slowly removing the warm clothing. He identified his Hitler obsession as paranoiac and apolitical:

> ...if Hitler were ever to conquer Europe, he would do away with hysterics of my kind, as had already happened in Germany, where they were treated as *Entartete* (degenerates). In any case, the effeminate and manifestly crackpot part I had cast Hitler in would suffice for the Nazis to damn me as an iconoclast. Similarly, my increased fanaticism, which had been heightened by Hitler's chasing Freud and Einstein out of Germany, showed that Hitler interested me purely as a focus for

> my own mania and because he struck me as having an unequalled disaster value...[63]

Breton interrupted him at this point: "Are you going to keep getting on our nerves much longer with your Hitler!" Dalí responded: "if I dream tonight that you and I are making love, I shall paint our best positions in the greatest of detail first thing in the morning." Breton responded: "I wouldn't advise it, my friend."[64] Dalí's description of the meeting adds weight to his claim that he was more faithful to the surrealist spirit than Breton himself, who continued to advocate that Dalí censor himself.

Not long after this encounter, Breton labeled Dalí a fascist for his counter-revolutionary activity and celebration of Hitler and expelled him from the surrealist group. With Breton's blessing, however, Dalí continued to participate in surrealist exhibitions. Apparently Breton intended to take advantage of Avida Dollars' ability to draw a crowd.[65]

v.

In December 1929, *Le Jeu lugubre* became the field on which Bataille and Breton unleashed their mutual hostility. The clash of these intellectual giants over the right to publish a reproduction of his painting galvanized Dalí. Moreover, it is my belief that the terms of their engagement lay the foundation for the structure and content of Dalí's work through the 1930s. In *Dalí and Surrealism* (1982), Ades reinscribed Bataille's *Documents* into the

perceptual world of Dalí and surrealism. Since Ades literally re-wrote Dalí's early history by rightfully including Bataille, informed art historians regularly recount his dispute with Breton over *Le Jeu lugubre.* As she pointed out, Bataille was the first critic to bring Freud's Oedipus complex to bear on Dalí's paintings. Incidents cited in Dalí's autobiography, *The Secret Life,* confirm that he frequently interpreted his personal history in light of Freud's Oedipal theories. Dalí is even more straightforward in his later autobigraphy, *Diary of a Genius*, where he writes: The hero, according to Freud, is a man who revolts against the paternal authority and the father, and finally vanquishes them."[66]

Dalí's uneasy relationship with his father ended abruptly when he publicly disowned his son. The cause of the rupture was Dalí's painting, *Amalgam*—exhibited at Goemans Gallery in 1929—which featured the Catholic image of Christ commonly known as "The Sacred Heart of Jesus" accompanied by the inscription: "Parfois je crache par plaisir sur le portrait de ma mère" [Sometimes, out of sheer pleasure, I spit on my mother's portrait.] [Fig. 27][67] During the 1940s, after Dalí's return to Spain and conversion to Catholicism, he explained away the imagery of *Amalgam* as the result of surrealism's demand that he paint without censorship everything that he dreamt or thought. As we will see, the ideological narrowness he ascribed to Breton was beginning to condition his own thinking. He added: "Now, with my present concept of morality, I wouldn't do it, because I

believe that certain experiences should not be conveyed to the public."[68]

In the battle with Bataille over *Le Jeu lugubre*, Breton fired the first volley when he persuaded Dalí not to allow Bataille to publish a reproduction of the painting in *Documents* no. 7. Many scholars note Dalí's allegiance to Breton at this juncture. Ades rightly connects this alliance to Dalí's immediate and long-term careerist motivation, not to a preference for Breton's ideology:

> Dalí, now alerted to the bitter ideological battle between Bataille and Breton, and fearing to be compromised in his new relations with the Surrealists by contact with Bataille, refused him permission to reproduce it....Apart from a natural affinity of ideas, the Surrealists offered him valuable contacts, a public forum, and the most stimulating intellectual and artistic environment. Dalí has never made it a secret either, that he nourished hopes of dislodging Breton from the leadership.[69]

Bataille did indeed publish his essay along with a schematic drawing of the painting [Fig. 28], which illustrates the multiple oedipal elements in *Le Jeu lugubre*. In what Krauss described as a fortuitous set-back for Bataille, the drawing maps the psychoanalytic implications of the painting far more clearly than a reproduction of the painting itself would have accomplished. Moreover, the drawing published by Bataille emphasized the scatological reference. In his prescient article, Bataille connected the soiled pants of the foreground figure to the use value of behavior that provokes punishment. Once considered from this perspective, the stained pants in *Le Jeu lugubre* can no longer be dismissed as merely a means for the artist to shock his viewer. For Dalí, scatological references were an artmaking strategy used as

a means to expose and explode the hierarchical power structures that condition all forms of representation.[70]

In her essay, "Jeu Lugubre," Krauss stressed the importance of scatological references—negations of negations—as a methodical strategy that uncovers and overturns power relationships.[71] To illuminate the way this works, Krauss cited Bataille's essay "The Language of Flowers," in which Bataille considers pollen—what many consider a stain on flower petals—an integral part of the object itself. Bataille opposed abstract formulas that encourage seeing the *ideal* not the real appearance of an object like a flower. He argued that a richer understanding can be achieved through acknowledgment of the significance of pollen and other "formless" matter. Instead of dismissing the pollen as stain, *seeing* it gives the viewer a truer understanding of the aphrodisiac characteristics of the flower. In "Jeu Lugubre," Krauss elaborated on the process of neutralization to explain the difference between the operation of the dialectic and the scatological. To speak of the process of neutralization is to speak of the third term of the Hegelian dialectic. This is the term that cancels, preserves and raises to a universal register the initially oppositional terms. The third term, for example, in the opposition young/old is old. When we want to know someone's age we ask, "How *old* are you?" Old is the neutral term in the dyad, young/old. To ask, "How young are you?" loads the question and acts as a catalyst to additional thought. Another example is the opposition

man/woman. "Chair*man*," "hu*man*," and "*man*kind" are neutral references to people in general. Structural linguistics revealed the power hierarchies at work in the process of neutralization. Making an issue of pollen on flower petals undoes the process of neutralization or universalization which wants to consider the petals as pure or ideal.

In "The Language of Flowers," Bataille refuted the Hegelian concept of a neutral third term. In its place he proposed an on-going play between appropriation and excretion. From this he arrived at his concept of the *informe* or base materialism, which calls attention to the arbitrariness of conventional categories that govern meaning and being.[72] Bataille's essay on Dalí's *Le Jeu lugubre* appeared in *Documents* in December 1929. This issue also included Bataille's definition of the concept of the *informe:*

> A dictionary begins when it no longer gives the meaning of words, but their tasks. Thus *formless* is not only an adjective having a given meaning, but a term that serves to bring things down in the world, generally requiring that each thing have its form. What it designates has non rights in any sense and gets itself squashed everywhere, like a spider or an earthworm. In fact, for academic men to be happy, the universe would have to take shape. All of philosophy has no other goal: it is a matter of giving a frock coat to what is, a mathematical frock coat. On the other hand, affirming that the universe resembles nothing and is only *formless* amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider or spit.[73]

Bataille associates intellectual despair and violence. He recommends fully engaging rage, even bestiality, in the interest of revolution and criticizes art that merely distracts its viewers from their rage. Bataille calls for dislocation from the formal constrictions of everyday life which he compares

to a harnessed horse or an obedient soldier.

By the time Breton wrote the "Second Surrealist Manifesto," also published in December 1929, the rivalry between him and Bataille had escalated to a public battle. Breton blamed Bataille for the defection of members of his circle. Breton denounced the "dissident surrealists" (Robert Desnos, Michel Leiris, André Masson and Jacques Prévert) for refusing his leadership and labeled Bataille an "excremental philosopher."[74] Moreover, Breton faulted Bataille for the contradiction between his stand against programmatic thinking and his consistent, categorical inclusion of society's refuse. Bataille's position was that Breton had a mindless and idealizing view of human nature, and an unyielding attraction to tripartite schemes that allow for the reconciliation of opposites. In lieu of Breton's belief in an Icarian rise to the high, Bataille insisted on the significance of the base and low. As we will see in the next chapter, Bataille's *informe*—a structuring strategy for evading conventional thinking—relates to Dalí's paranoiac-critical method.

[1]Salvador Dalí, *The Conquest of the Irrational,* trans. by Patrick Waldberg, *Surrealism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 91. Complete text published in Salvador Dalí, *The Conquest of the Irrational*, trans. by Joachim Neugroschel as reprinted in Alain Bosquet, *Conversations with Dalí* (E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1966). Originally published as *La Conquête de l'irrationnel*. Paris: Editions Surréalistes, 1935.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., 91-92.

[4]Ibid., 92.

[5]Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993), 22. In Dalí's personal library there is a dedicated copy of Roger Caillois's *Procès Intellectuel de l'Art (Exposé des Motifs)*, 1935. Caillois's dedication reads: "à Salvador Dalí les pages qui demandent l'extension de recherches du genre de celles qu'il a inaugurés. En toute admiration et avec le meilleur souvenir de R. Caillois." Dalí would also have been familiar with Callois's "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia," *Minotaure* (June 1935) which presents a chilling portrait of the preying mantis as life's mechanical (unstoppable) double. Callois writes that one of the uncanny qualities of the mantis is that its defense against predators is to "play dead"—a posture that mimes the inanimate. On the other hand, even when decapitated the mantis continues to perform a hideous robotic dance of life including when faced with danger it can fall into a fake, cadaverous immobility. Thus, even when dead, the preying mantis can simulate death. It stands at the border between life and death not as a barrier but as the most porous of membranes allowing one side to contaminate the other. Callois relates this behavior to the theoretical and clinical writings of Pierre Janet and compares this to some personal experiences. Schizophrenics, he writes, are "dispossessed souls [for whom] space seems to be a devouring force. Space pursues them, encircles them digests them in a gigantic phagocytosis. It ends by replacing them. Then the body separates itself from thought, the individual breaks the boundary of his skin and occupies the other side of his senses. He tries to look at *himself* from any point whatever in space. He feels himself becoming space, *dark space where things cannot be put*. He is similar, not similar to something, but just *similar*. And he invents spaces of which he is 'the convulsive possession.' Caillois singles out Dalí's paranoid imagery as an example of mimetic assimilation: "...hence the pictures painted by Salvador Dalí around 1930 [*La femme visible,* Paris,

1930], in which, whatever the artist may say, these invisible men, sleeping women, horses, and lions are less the expression of ambiguities or of paranoiac 'plurivocities' than of mimetic assimilations of the animate to the inanimate." [Translated by John Shepley in *October* 31 (1984): 17-32.]

[6]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 17.

[7]Elizabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co.: A History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985,* translated with a foreword by Jeffrey Mehlman (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 110. First published in Paris as *La bataille de cent ans: Histoire de la psychanalyse en France, 2.* Editions du Seuil, October 1986. Eventually Lacan paid homage to Dalí but not until long after he had defended his thesis in medicine, 112.

[8]Ibid, 113.

[9]Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis,* edited by Jacques-Alain Miller, translated from the French by Alan Sheridan (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1981), vii.

[10]Dalí, *The Conquest of the Irrational*, 113.

[11]Roudinesco, 118.

[12]Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism*, 74-75.

[13]Gibson, 438.

[14]Gibson, 439.

[15]Sigmund Freud, "Psychoanalytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (1911)," *Three Case Histories*, with an Introduction by Philip Rieff (New York: Collier Books, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1963), 162.

[16]Ibid., 165.

[17]Ibid., 143.

[18]Ibid., 162.

[19]Theodore Lidz, "A Developmental Theory," *Schizophrenia: Science and Practice*, ed. John C. Shershow (Cambridge and London: Harvard

University Press, 1978), 88-89.

[20]Freud, 166.

[21]In his analysis of Dr. Schreber, Freud quotes Schreber's idea "that after all it really must be very nice to be a woman submitting to the act of copulation," which could, wrote Freud, only occur to Schreber in a state of mind between waking and sleeping. This "emasculation phantasy" would have been "rejected with the greatest indignation if he had been fully conscious." Freud, 108.

[22]David Vilaseca, *The Apocryphal Subject: Masochism, Identification, and Paranoia in Salvador Dalí's Autobiographical Writings*, Catalan Studies: Translations and Criticism vol. 17 (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 3. The Dalí autobiographical writings considered by Vilaseca are *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* (1942); *Journal d'un génie* (1964); *Les Passions selon Dalí* (1968), written by Louis Pauwels from recorded conversations with Dalí; *Comment on devient Dalí: les aveux inavouables de Salvador Dalí* (1973), written by André Parinaud from texts by Dalí and from conversations with him; Salvador *Dalí escribe a Federico García Lorca* (1978), ed. Rafael Santos Torroella. Vilaseca also relies on autobiographical information in Dalí's paranoiac-critical interpretation of Millet's *Angélus* in *Le Mythe tragique de l'Angélus de Millet: Interpretation "paranoiaque-critique"* (1963); *Entretiens avec Salvador Dalí* (1966), an interview of Dalí by Alain Bosquet and tangentially considers *Impressions and Private Memoirs of Salvador Dalí*, a booklet edited by A. Reynolds Morse containing a youthful diary by Dalí of January 1920, which was never intended for publication and "was written previous to the existence of Dalí as a public persona."

[23]Ibid., 5.

[24]Ibid., 80. Vilaseca cites Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection,* trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

[25]Ibid., 85-86. The Bersani text cited is *Baudelaire and Freud* (London: California University Press, 1977).

[26] Dalí, *A Secret Life*, 94.

[27] Vilaseca, 87.

[28]André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting,* as cited in *What is*

Surrealism? Selected Writings, edited and introduced by Franklin Rosemont, (New York: Pathfinder, 1978), 23. Rosemont emphasizes Breton's dismissive attitude toward painting, which the latter considered a "lamentable expedient." Rosemont cited Breton: "It is impossible for me to consider a picture as anything but a window, in which my first interest is to know what it *looks out on*."

[29]William S. Rubin, Catalogue for The Museum of Modern Art exhibition: March 27-June 9, 1968, *Dada Surrealism and Their Heritage* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968), 64.

[30]Salvador Dalí, "Reality and Surreality," *La Gaceta literaria* no. 44, October 15, 1928. Republished in *Oui: The Paranoid-Critical Revolution*, ed. by Robert Descharnes, trans. by Yvonne Shafir, (Boston: Exact Change, 1998), 61. Shafir notes that in this essay, Dalí "sets the stage for his signature theory of Paranoid-Critical Activity by arguing that objects in themselves do not have any necessary cohesion; it is the culturally conditioned intellect that organizes perception. Later Dalí will consistently maintain that in order to truly 'see,' it is necessary to simulate the paranoid gaze which is governed by the will to systematize confusion (that is, perform the 'cohesion') while disturbing normative reality." p.168.

[31]Ibid., 62.

[32]For a discussion of Dalí's photographic practice and its significance to surrealism and to our own "image-infested culture" see Rosalind Krauss, "The Phantom of Sex Appeal," Catalogue for the exhibition *Surrealism: Two Private Eyes,* Guggenheim Museum, June 4-September 12, 1999, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), 722-3.

[33]Dalí, "Photography: Pure Creation of the Mind," *L'Amic de les Arts* no. 18, September 30, 1927. Reprinted in *Oui*, 12.

[34]Ibid., 13.

[35]Salvador Dalí, "Photographic Data," *La Gaceta literaria* no. 6, February 1929. Reprinted in *Oui,* 70-71.

[36]Rosalind E. Krauss, "Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1986), 101.

[37]Ibid., 112.

[38]Ibid, 113, 116.

[39]Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*. The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC. (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), 57.

[40]Lubar, "Objects of Desire" 20.

[41]Shafir, editor's note in *Oui*, p. 169 commenting on Dalí's "Review of Anti-Artistic Tendencies," 75.

[42]Salvador Dalí, "Documentary—Paris 1929—1," one of the series first published in the Barcelona paper, *La Publicitat* in April, May and June of 1929 (I: April 26; II: April 28; III: May 7; IV: May 23; V: June 7; VI: June 26) reprinted in *Oui*, 93.

[43]Ibid., 95.

[44]Salvador Dalí, "Documentary—Paris 1929—II," see my note 41. Reprinted in *Oui,* 97.

[45]André Breton, *Nadja*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1960), 24. Originally published in 1928 by Librairie Gallimard, Paris.

[46]Dalí, "Documentary—Paris 1929—1," 94.

[47]André Breton, "The First Dalí Exhibition," the preface to the exhibition catalogue for Dalí's first Paris exhibition, reprinted in Rosemont, 44-45. In addition to writing the catalogue preface for the exhibition, Breton, who had an impressive collection of art, purchased Dalí's painting, *The Accommodations of Desire.*

[48]André Thirion, *Révolutionnaires sans révolution*, Paris, 1972. As cited in Robert Descharnes and Gilles Néret, *Dalí: The Paintings 1904-1946* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1999), 265.

[49]Haim Finkelstein, *Salvador Dalí's Art and Writing, 1927-1942: The Metamorphoses of Narcissus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 122.

[50]Breton, "The First Dalí Exhibition," 45.

[51]Gibson, 304-307.

[52]In the final chapter of this dissertation, I describe incidents which suggest Dalí's adherence to this program including destroying his window display for Bonwit Teller and his controversial participation in the New York World's Fair.

[53]Salvador Dalí, "The Moral Position of Surrealism," lecture given at the Ateneu Club published in *Hélix* (Vilafranca del Penedes), March 1930, no. 1. Reprinted in Gibson, 306.

[54]Dawn Ades, "Introduction to Dalí's unpublished film scenario for a documentary on surrealism, *Studio International. Journal of the Creative Arts and Design*, London, vol. 195, no. 993/4, 1982, 62. As cited in Gibson, 296.

[55]Salvador Dalí, "L'Ane pourri," *La Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution* no. 1 (Paris, July 1930). *Oui,* 115.

[56]Finkelstein, 185.

[57]Ibid., 186.

[58]André Breton, "What is Surrealism," lecture given in Brussels in June 1934 and later issued as a pamphlet. An abridged version supplemented with other texts by Breton was published in English by Faber & Faber (London 1936). Reprinted in Rosemont, 136.

[59]Rosalind E. Krauss, "Cadaver," in *Formless: A User's Guide*, catalogue of an exhibition curated by Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss held May 22-August 26, 1996 at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 65.

[60]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 219.

[61]In his autobiography, *Salvador Dalí: Diary of a Genius*, trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1965), p. 22 Dalí claimed that "[T]he anagram 'avida dollars' was a talisman for me. It rendered the rain of dollars fluid, sweet, and monotonous. Someday I shall tell the whole truth about the way in which this blessed disorder of Danaë was garnered. It will be a chapter of a new book, probably my masterpiece: 'On the Life of Salvador Dalí Considered as a Work of Art."

[62]Descharnes and Néret, 255. Dalí describes the scene in *Diary of a Genius*, 14-17.

[63]Ibid., 256.

[64]Ibid., 260.

[65]Breton's dedication of *Au lavoir noir* (Paris: Editions G.L.M., 1936) in Dalí's personal library in Figueres—"à Gala and Dalí"—further complicates Breton's relationship with Dalí in the mid-1930s: "Elle est superbe, Gala, avec son velours brun royi de lignes andulées. Fourrure blanche autour de la nuque, sache carminér sous l'epaule gauche, gustre grands yeux...concentriques, la crauauté, l'intelligence, encore la crauauté et la jeunesse. Il suffit d'ouvrir, la fenêtre pour que l'événement si disséque dans la espagne. La maison est cachée sous de grands plataues. Viendra-t-il, l'élégant inconnu, l'empauachi vêtu de velours marron et cravaté de fourrure blanche. Le temps est orageuse, c'est lui, c'est Salvador, les grandes ailes intactes, c'est le génie et le courage, sous la moindre éraflure."

[66]Dalí, *Diary of a Genius*, 195.

[67]Carlos Rojas, *Salvador Dalí or the Art of Spitting On Your Mother's Portrait*, first published as *El mundo mítico y mágico de Salvador Dalí* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés, 1985), trans. by Alma Amell, The Pennsylvania State University Press (University Park, Pennsylvania: 1993), 87.

[68]Ibid, 86.

[69]Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism*, 69.

[70]Krauss, "Jeu Lugubre," in *Formless,* 114.

[71]Ibid, 113.

[72]Bois and Krauss, "Part Object," in *Formless,* 155.

[73]Georges Bataille, "Formless," *Documents 7* (critical dictionary) (December 1929) as reprinted in Allan Stoekl, ed. and trans., *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 31.

[74]André Breton, *Second Surrealist Manifesto* (Paris 1929) as cited in Stoekl, xi.

Chapter 3

Regarding Dalí's Paintings

i.

This chapter looks at Dalí's surrealist paintings to trace his fascination with and exploitation of perspective—representational, visual and psychological—set against Western culture's loss of faith in vision as a source of truth. My decision to focus on Dalí's paintings in relation to surrealism is not simply an exercise in historicism. It is a means to formulate his contribution to modernism within a specific frame of time. Dalí's career lasted more than half-a-century, and his work changed significantly during those years. To consider his work in the context of surrealism is to witness his critical engagement and ultimate complicity with major currents of modernist thought. In 1927 vision's unreliability as a road to truth combined with psychoanalytic theory to become the subject of Dalí's paintings. The form, style and content of his art of the late 1920s and 1930s confirm his conviction that the very act of looking was a way of inventing.[1]

In conversation with Dawn Ades, Dalí differentiated his artistic and intellectual forebears from those of other surrealists.[2] Along with them he admired the Marquis de Sade and Lautréamont. He criticized the surrealist

"uncultivated and romantic" taste for Rimbaud and Baudelaire. Dalí's preferences included the seventeenth-century classical playwright Corneille; the French architect Ledoux, famous for ideas at once classical and visionary; and the nineteenth century academic painters, Meissonier and Bouguereau. As Ades justifiably claimed, Dalí's predilections tended toward the classical at the point where it moves toward decadence. With typical disregard for consistency, he represented himself as being at once progressive, innovative and reactionary. Indeed Dalí engaged formal aspects of Cartesian perspectivalism but rejected their conventional tie to rationality. In *Conquest of the Irrational* (1935), he claimed that his goal as a painter is to use the most rational of painting strategies to represent the irrational:

> My whole ambition in the pictorial domain is to materialize the images of concrete irrationality with the most imperialist fury of precision.—In order that the world of the imagination and of concrete irrationality may be as objectively evident, of the same consistency, of the same durability, of the same persuasive, cognoscitive and communicable thickness as that of the exterior world of phenomenal reality....[3]

Dalí's paintings depend on the formal conventions of tradition's "old masters." He distinguishes his representations by draining their illusionistic forms of their traditional association with a singular truth.

ii.

We see evidence of Dalí's predilection for going against the grain in the field of art as early as 1922, when he distanced himself from his

professors and fellow students at the School of Fine Arts in Madrid. "With contempt for their unwitting conservatism," Dalí wrote, "I was already in full reaction against cubism. They, in order to reach cubism, would have had to live several lives!" He looked down on his professors who he claimed were still taken with French impressionism. According to Dalí, they demanded that each art student "find his own manner; [because] there are no laws in painting. Interpret--interpret everything, and paint exactly what you see, and above all put your soul into it; it's temperament, temperament that counts!"[4]

He elaborated:

> The students considered me a reactionary, an enemy of progress and of liberty. They called themselves revolutionaries and innovators, because all of a sudden they were allowed to paint as they pleased, and because they had just eliminated black from their palettes, calling it dirt, and replacing it with purple! Their most recent discovery was this: everything is made iridescent by light--no black; shadows are purple. But this revolution of impressionism was one which I had thoroughly gone through at the age of twelve, and even at that time I had not committed the elementary error of suppressing black from my palette. A single glance at a small Renoir which I had seen in Barcelona would have been ample for me to understand all this in a second.[5]

Notice too that Dalí singles out his ability to "understand" a Renoir after a "single glance." He places great confidence in his ability to know how to look. Even so, as we saw in the incidents cited by Vilaseca, Dalí demonstrated that the visually accomplished seer can be misled by visual evidence.

In spite of his talent, his academic career ended abruptly when the

disciplinary council expelled him. As he explains in *The Secret Life*, his dismissal resulted from his refusal to be examined by the professors at the School of Fine Arts.[6] The oral examination was to take place in a crowded hall where he would be questioned on a randomly selected subject. By chance, when his turn came, the subject was one he knew well. Rather than capitalize on his good fortune, from his position on the platform beside his professors, he declared:

> I am very sorry, but I am infinitely more intelligent than these three professors, and I therefore refuse to be examined by them. I know this subject much too well.[7]

From a psychoanalytical standpoint, Bataille's interpretation of *Le Jeu lugubre* in light of the Oedipus complex has currency here. Inasmuch as Dalí's early career is marked by rebellion against figures of authority, it is precisely this conflict that inspired him to formulate his paranoid-critical method. A state of complete freedom held no appeal for Dalí. Instead, meaning for him depended on his knowledge of cultural, artistic and religious codes—a knowledge that he used traditional forms to ruthlessly betray.

iii.

In this chapter, I consider Dalí's representational strategies in the late 1920s and 30s and distinguish them from art's traditions. During the 1920s Dalí simultaneously exhibited paintings described as belonging to markedly different style categories including seventeenth-century Dutch painting,

academic painting, impressionism, post-impressionism, fauvism, cubism, purism, futurism, and Catalan popular art. Initially critics reacted favorably. But by the mid-1920s, this systematic plurality in representational styles provoked questions concerning what this tendency revealed about the artist himself. At this point, his reputation as a canny artist driven primarily by an insatiable craving for recognition took root. As early as 1927, one critic charged that "Dalí flirts too much with other artists' discoveries to be considered a true member of the avant garde." More recently, in an essay called "The first image—Dalí and his critics: 1919 to 1929," Fèlix Fanés referred to "[t]he development of Dalí's image as an insincere artist putting on the mask of modern art in order to draw attention to himself."[8] Cognizant of the criticism, he continued to assimilate and simulate both accredited and discredited styles of painting.

There is no evidence that Dalí attempted to conceal the influence of other artists on his work. On the contrary, there are many examples of the value he placed on his long-standing familiarity with significant artists and art movements. According to Dalí, his obsession with art began at around the age of eight when his father gave him a 52-volume set of Gowans Art Books. In the "True Childhood Memories" chapter of *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, the artist writes that:

> ...these little monographs which my father had so prematurely given me as a present produced an effect on me that was one of the most decisive in my life. I came to know by heart all

> those pictures of this history of art, which have been familiar to me since my earliest childhood, for I would spend entire days contemplating them.[9]

Ian Gibson wrote about Dalí's unusual interest in the miniature reproductions of the great masters found in Gowans. From this account, we see traces of Dalí's paranoiac thinking in the artist's difficulty distinguishing between the representational and the real. He begins by citing Dalí:

> 'From a very early age I remember the collection in our home and I used to look at the reproductions with positive delight. I adored Rubens's sensual nudes and the Flemish domestic scenes....' He also hugely enjoyed Ingres [wrote Gibson]...'falling in love' with the naked girl of *The Fountain.* So well did he get to know his collection of Gowans that later he had difficulty in sorting out his 'real' experiences from those lived vicariously through the reproductions.[10]

In 1919 Dalí collaborated with other students at the Figueres Instituto on a magazine called *Studium.*[11] One of his contributions was a column called "The Great Masters of Painting," in which he wrote about artists he first encountered in the Gowans series including Goya, El Greco, Dürer, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Velazquez. By the late 1920s, Dalí had studied and mastered most of the representational strategies of the key figures in the history of Western art. The last page of the catalogue for his first one-man-show at the Galerie Dalmau in Barcelona, for example, cites this quotation from Ingres:

> Celui qui ne voudra mettre à contribution aucune autre esprit qui le sien même se trouvera bientôt réduit à la plus misérable de toutes les imitations, c'est-à-dire à celle de ses propres ouvrages.[12]

In October-November 1926, Dalí participated in an exhibition of Catalan pictorial modernism at Dalmau's gallery. The show compared paintings by contemporary Catalan artists to works by foreign avant-garde artists including Robert Delaunay, Raoul Dufy, Albert Gleizes and Francis Picabia. Paintings by Joan Miró, who at the time was a successful Catalan artist working in Paris, were also exhibited.[13] After this show, Miró began to take an interest in Dalí's career. In September 1927, Miró and his Paris dealer, Pierre Loeb, visited Dalí in Figueres. Loeb appreciated the young artist's new work. In a letter written to Dalí after Loeb returned to Paris, he expressed cautious optimism and offered his advice:

> I do see a possibility of taking you on, but I find you are still veering too rapidly from one influence to another and I am waiting for the opening up of your own personality. I am sure you will soon find a *direction* and with your gifts I feel certain that you will have a fine career as a painter.[14]

The paintings previewed by Loeb—including *Apparatus and Hand* [Fig. 18] and *Honey is Sweeter than Blood* [Fig. 19]—were among those that would bring Dalí to the attention of critics when shown at the Barcelona Autumn Salon of 1927. They mark a significant change in the form, style and structure of his art. Dalí's growing interest in Freudian psychology contributed to the new direction. As predicted by Loeb, Dalí did indeed find his own painting style. Moreover, Loeb's letter serves to remind us of the pressure placed on modern artist's in the first half of the twentieth-century

to find their own direction and to obfuscate references to the history of art—a theme important to discussions of Dalí's relevance to postmodern painting, which I explore in the last chapter of this dissertation.

iv.

Soon after receiving Loeb's letter, Dalí painted *Little Ashes* (January or February 1928) [Fig. 29]. A thoroughly original and persuasive work of art, *Little Ashes* was one of Dalí's most ambitious paintings to date. A contemporaneous letter written from Dalí to a friend from his student days in Madrid—the poet Federico Garcia Lorca—declared Dalí's intention to elude conventional thinking. "Federico," Dalí wrote, "I am painting pictures which make me die for joy, I am creating with an absolute naturalness, without the slightest aesthetic concern."[15] *Little Ashes* marks the close of Dalí's first period of technical achievement and the opening of one in which he directly and indirectly borrows imagery from high art and popular culture; and experiments with complicated forms of illusionism such as double and anamorphic imagery. Dalí indeed was using his technical gifts to find his own direction as a painter—a path that would give him access to a wide range of visual imagery.

Little Ashes refers to forms found in the work of Jean Arp, Giorgio de Chirico, Joan Miró, photography, and even microscopic and x-ray images. The influence of Miró is evident in a painted tribute to him that Dalí framed

and signed within *Little Ashes*. This painting within a painting, located just above the horizon line on the work's left side, contains five flatly-rendered guitars and two round forms suggestive of female breasts. The ensemble references Miró's painting, *Carnival of Harlequin* (1924-25) [Fig. 30]. Instead of signing *Little Ashes* at the bottom of the painting, Dalí located his signature at the bottom of his framed reference to Miró. In this way, Dalí signaled his freedom to represent any form—painted, mechanical, imaginary, natural or even copied.[16] As we will consider later in this chapter, by the mid-1930s his fascination with the nineteenth-century painting the *Angelus* [Fig. 31] by Jean-Francois Millet led Dalí to represent it in his paintings and to elaborate on it in his text, *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus.*

In addition to the framed reference to Miró in *Little Ashes,* Dalí also borrows from Miró's paintings, *Catalan Landscape (The Hunter)* and *The Family* [Fig. 32]. In *The Family,* for example, Miró painted the letters "JOUR" in a style that references cubist painting. Dalí sets up a mise-en-abyme scenario by locating the citation of Miró in the same section of the canvas where Miró cited the cubists in *The Family*. Other references to forms that recall Miró in *Little Ashes* include numerous snake-like undulating forms, geometric shapes and erotic body parts. *Little Ashes* acknowledges Miró in other noteworthy ways. For example, Dalí divided his canvas horizontally into two parts in a way that echoes Miró's *Carnival of Harlequin.* The two parts of the Miró, however, represent the floor and wall of an

interior space while Dalí's divisions depict a landscape setting. In terms of color, the striking blue of numerous forms in Miró's *Carnival of Harlequin* becomes the sky blue background that dominates *Little Ashes.* Bright in mood and color, this background contradicts the theme of Dalí's painting.

Dalí's preference for modeling forms gives *Little Ashes* a strong three-dimensional quality, which serves to further distinguish him from Miró. Miró outlined his forms in a way that gave them an illustrational quality and his overall painting a flatter surface. Later on, when American critics discredited the illusionistic style of surrealist painting, Miró was lauded as a forerunner of abstract expressionism while Dalí was derided as an outmoded artist, a veritable throw-back to academicism. In an interview with Alain Bosquet in the late 1960s, Dalí refused to be compared favorably to the academic painters saying that "I'm an absolute non-entity" when compared to classical painters. Ades suggests that this ostensible lack of confidence on Dalí's part may actually be an opportunistic attempt to distance himself from the reviled nineteenth-century painters, Bouguereau and Meissonier, who he had aligned himself with as a young artist. However, as Ades points out, "this line of enquiry...is a dead end; what mattered [to Dalí] in the deployment of skill was its purposes and possibilities."

The emphasis Dalí placed on decay and death in *Little Ashes* is at odds with the playful, erotic spirit of Miró. The dominant form in *Little Ashes* resembles what Ian Frazier once called "the encroaching Hefty bag of

death." It is an enormous, headless, sexually ambiguous form precariously balanced on one amputated leg. Dalí seems to have converted one of Arp's flat, biomorphic forms into a three-dimensional threat. Its grotesque appearance immediately puts it in opposition to Miró's small playful creatures. It also confirms the new direction Dalí's painting took as he moved away from the influence of Picasso. In "New Limits of Painting" (1928) he signals this shift:

> Let us leave Picasso aside. It would serve us better to harmonize with Arp who offers a very wide range of realizations with an almost invisible naturalness....Arp's reliefs, as Breton says, have the weightiness and lightness of a swallow.[17]

The floating form in *Little Ashes* resembles a helium-filled balloon that once soared in a radiant blue sky, but is in the process of incinerating and tumbling back to earth. This grave and weighty presence gains descriptive power from accompanying details. Forms merge, contort, morph and liquify. The overall aqueous impression creates a panoramic image in a constant state of change. The painting begins the experiments in fluidity that Dalí will conduct for the next decade.

Little Ashes is rooted in the traditional elements of painting: space, light, shadow, scale, color and the relationships among them. Dalí used varying degrees of modeling to signal relative importance. The graduated modeling of the careening figure gives it a three-dimensionality denied many of the other objects in the painting. The virtually ungraduated modeling of

the birds and donkeys, in particular, renders them flat and spectral. The landscape setting is only a point of departure for Dalí. The formal strategies of traditional landscape painting are pushed on stage and left with nothing much to do. The separation of land and sky is only that. There is no discernible reason for grounded or floating forms. Careful modeling of one figure gives way to rudimentary drawing in another. This mixing of styles recalls earlier work by Max Ernst such as *Pieta or Revolution by Night* and *Elephant of the Celebes* (1921) [Fig. 33 and 34]. Dalí's crystalline surface from which all trace of brushwork and impasto is suppressed recalls other paintings by Ernst of the early 1920s.

There is an abiding gravity in the paintings of this period along with a trace of self-ironizing, black humor and an awareness of the hypocrisy and ridiculousness of so much of what goes on in life. Headless bodies and body parts circulate and short-circuit any attempt to define a single meaning. Represented on the ground are two birds having sex, and a woman's hand fondling her breast while it squirts liquid from her decapitated torso. Numerous floating fingers reinforce the suggestion of castration and masturbation, themes from Freud, which will condition many of Dalí's surrealist paintings. All of this operates in the service of a very complicated sensibility—objective, psychological and transgressive. Dalí's formal and iconographic choices convey the indeterminacy of a situation in which personal desire struggles against a rigid social code. In an article called

"Joan Miró" published in *L'Amic de les Arts* in June of 1928 Dalí claimed that Miró's paintings offer "the instantaneous possession of reality at a moment in which our mind considers this whole separately from the antireal, stereotyped image that our intelligence has progressively formed in an artificial way."[18] As we continue to explore Dalí's art and his artmaking strategies, we will see that he was speaking as much about himself as Miró.

v.

The swarming flies and schematic decaying donkey in *Little Ashes* references Dalí's earlier painting, *Honey is Sweeter than Blood* completed along with *Apparatus and Hand* while he was performing military service in Figueres. Bataille reproduced *Honey is Sweeter than Blood* in *Documents,* no. 5, 1929 with his dictionary entry "The Eye" and two illustrations from *L'Oeil de la Police.* The paranoid possibilities of the illustrations—taken from a pulp fiction crime magazine—were not lost on Dalí. Today *Honey is Sweeter than Blood* is known to us only through black-and-white photographs. The study for it, however, gives insight into its color and evolution [Fig. 35]. In *Honey is Sweeter than Blood* and *Apparatus and Hand* a rotting donkey, fragmented body parts and mechanical anthropomorphic composite creatures play an important role. Both paintings (along with *Little Ashes, Le Jeu lugubre, The Great Masturbator* [Fig. 36], *The*

Accommodations of Desire [Fig. 25] and *The First Days of Spring)* were included in Dalí's first Paris exhibition in 1929 at Galerie Goemans. There is an excitement about these paintings generated by their perverse, obsessive and unexpected illuminations. Dalí's representations of Freudian themes—including autoeroticism, Oedipal guilt and repression—shocked, entertained and even repulsed those who saw them. The consensus of opinion however, was that the young Spaniard was worthy of note. Gibson summarized the extant commentary on the financially rewarding show beginning with E. Tériade in *L'Intransigeant:*

> Noting that Dalí had come from Catalunya with the agenda of conquering the French capital, Tériade found the exhibition worse than provincial—it expressed "provincial despair trying to be up-to-date"....He advised Dalí, who clearly possessed talent, to distrust all the qualities he displayed in this exhibition. Reading between the lines one senses that the review was as much directed against surrealism in general as against the Spaniard in particular.
>
> Other critics were more indulgent. "Le Rapin," in *Comoedia,* found Dalí's paintings "strange, Bruegelesque, extremely interesting." The most sensitive review came from "Flouquet," in Henri Barbusse's weekly, *Monde,* who enthused about the "astonishing power" of these works, their assault on logic and on "good taste." Dalí was more adept at minute detail than a Persian, more sure of his means than a Japanese. A "sower of unease," the Catalan, "Flouquet" concluded, "expresses all the poetry, both terrible and sweet, of Freudianism."[19]

The style of *Apparatus and Hand* (formerly titled *The Wood of Gadgets)* reflects Dalí's familiarity with de Chirico and the purists. In his catalogue entry for this painting, which is in The Salvador Dalí Museum in

Florida, Lubar wrote:

> The form of the apparatus in *Apparatus and Hand* surely derives from de Chirico's paintings of mannequins and metaphysical armatures, while Dalí's interest in precise geometries and objects of the modern, industrialized world reveals his affinities with the project Amédée Ozenfant and Charles-Edouard Jeanneret advanced in the pages of L'Esprit nouveau (1920-24) which Dalí is known to have read.[20]

Dalí scholars frequently interpret *Apparatus and Hand* in light of Dalí's prose poem, "Saint Sebastian," first published in the Catalonian journal *L'Amic de les Arts* on July 31, 1927. In the critical notes accompanying the English translations of early writings by Dalí published in *Oui: The Paranoid-Critical Revolution. Writings 1927-1933,* Yvonne Shafir connected "Saint Sebastian" to the development of Dalí's paranoid thinking:

> Dalí's saint is a cipher of his sexual ambivalence towards Lorca. (Dalí claimed that he would have surrendered to Lorca's advances, only that "it hurt too much"—an admission that was omitted from the Spanish edition of Dalí's *Conversations with Alain Bosquet*). Saint Sebastian , as a metaphor for sexual ambiguity (Dalí's androgeny/effeminacy is legend) and ambivalent desire, thus functions as a double image foreshadowing the 'images á double figuration' at the heart of Dalí's Paranoid-Critical theory which owes much to the Freudian diagnosis of paranoia as a defense mechanism against a homosexual desire.[21]

Lubar rightly noted the source of psychoanalytic interpretations of this and other Dalí paintings: "If Dalí's Freudian critics find guilt, repression, and castration anxiety in his work, it is because Dalí *put it there* as a subject of representation."[22] In light of the imagery, which "immediately establishes a sexual narrative," Lubar sustains the conventional interpretation of the

gadget as a "machine for self-pleasure." Regarding the connection between *Apparatus and Hand* and Dalí's poem, "Saint Sebastian," Lubar wrote:

> In this poem, Dalí describes his vision of the martyred Italian saint, who suffers his passion with stoical resignation as arrows pierce his exposed flesh. 'In certain parts of [the saint's body,' Dalí writes, 'the veins appeared on the surface with their intense blue of a [Joachim de] Patiner storm, and traced curves of painful voluptuousness on the pink coral of the skin.' The venal imagery reappears in *Apparatus and Hand* on the side of the gadget, and as a network of branchlike lines that extend from the wrist to the fingers of the throbbing red hand. In this way, Dalí identifies the saint's body with physical passion, and his martyrdom with the 'slings and arrows' of an erotic exchange.[23]

In "Dalí's Optical Illusions," Ades considered the Baroque device of accelerated perspective in *Apparatus and Hand*, which "by contracting the diminution of scale and raising the horizon" gave the viewer a more dramatic sense of space:

> Perspectival illusion is always cast as just that—the artificial creation of space. Like de Chirico, who constructs incompatible architectural vistas—buildings and arcades that do not obey the same perspectival imperatives—Dalí uses conflicting perspectives, but also creates greater ambiguities between settings and objects. In *Apparatus and Hand*, for example, he distorts the classic normal perspective which takes an eye-level horizon line, and fixes on it two points—a central point to which all parallel straight lines converge, and another point along the horizon line to which diagonal lines converge, at right angles from the spectator's viewing position. In *Apparatus and Hand*, neither the receding sides of the foreground platform (which meet in the very center of the picture), nor the lines of the geometric-pyramid figure relate to the horizon line, or to each other. The anthropomorphic geometric figure in the foreground, tottering on its spindly caliper-legs is thus seen from some higher position, which troubles the very idea of a single and unified viewing subject.[24]

In *Apparatus and Hand,* we see the Baroque distortions that will allow Dalí to represent vision's unreliability as a source of truth.

A similar dramatic space structures Dalí's study for *Honey is Sweeter than Blood*. Its structure and iconography suggest a dream or serial narrative in which episodes are woven together by threads of similar intensity, focus and bearing. Its meaning depends on an assortment of forms arranged along a strong diagonal separating slate gray land from Mediterranean blue sky. A medley of dancing forms and a large severed human head dominate the middle zone between ground and sky. Comprehension is not made easy by the nature of some of these forms—geometric composites that slyly reference the human body. The landscape also contains a bewildering mixture of more realistically rendered body parts. Most notable is a rotting donkey with slit stomach and swarming flies that fills the lower right corner of the painting. Just beyond it, a trapezoidal pool filled with red liquid receives the blood draining from a decapitated, handless and footless grisaille female form. On the horizon line, midway between the decaying donkey and the bloodbath, is the severed head that is at once realistic and schematic. It calls to mind a diagram of the circulatory system of a human head and the blood red veins on the central figure in *Apparatus and Hand*. In the background, composite geometric forms seem to dance on the beach amid body fragments including two long arms with hands.

While Dalí imparts life—even jaunty life—to dissolution, he introduces

death repeatedly. One of the arms lies flat on the ground, the other—spaghetti thin—balances in the air on top of a weight that anchors it. In the sky, female breasts which can also be read as eyes float like balloons. Miró's paintings of the early 1920s clearly had an influence on Dalí's choice of color, form and subject matter. But the life in death, death in life theme is pure Dalí. The painting ought to be grisly but strangely is not—thanks to Dalí's ability to set up human habitation in taboo territory. Lively forms and dead bodies alternate in a series of variations that circle and circle and ultimately hold both states in a kind of balance. Descriptions of Dalí's paintings often overlook the paradoxes in his art. He mixes incompatibilities—a *jeu lugubre* of dancing figures and decaying flesh. All these things display an unlikely springiness and zest. The painting suggests something deep and esoteric, something that one knows more by experience than by the intellect.

The paintings from the Goemans show including *Honey is Sweeter than Blood, Apparatus and Hand* and *Little Ashes* establish a new aesthetic direction. In these important early landscapes we find the integral development of Dalí's use of crisp drawing and modeling to convey erotic desire, ambiguity and confusion.

vi.

In 1929, the year of the release of *Un Chien Andalou*, we see Dalí's

first mature painting style in full bloom. The quality and quantity of these works—including *The Enigma of Desire—My Mother, My Mother, My Mother* [Fig. 37], *Le Jeu lugubre, The Great Masturbator, Portrait of Paul Eluard* [Fig. 38], *The Red Tower (Anthropomorphic Tower), The Invisible Man* [Fig. 22], *The Two Balconies, The First Days of Spring, The Accommodations of Desire* [Fig. 25], *Illumined Pleasures* [Fig. 26]— make it an impressive series. The iconography constitutes a kind of conceptual dream vocabulary, which brings together highlights from an ephemeral past and makes the kinds of connections found in Breton's *Nadja*. Dalí wrote at length about the relationship between certain images in these paintings and his childhood memories. Yet the series reverberates in such a way as to evoke a set of concerns without specifying direct connections. They share a series of variously combined psychological ingredients that result in paintings that are almost embarrassingly candid. Taken individually and together they offer fertile material for interpretive analysis. They are direct, intimate, violent yet vulnerable, and center on a few main themes.

The forms, structure and iconology of *Illumined Pleasures* (Fig. 26) exemplify this. In the foreground, a dribble of red paint suggests blood on a knife—the aftermath of a violent act. The bloodied blade and the fingers of the hand that wields it define the right side of a triangular group of body parts and objects. The triad's bottom and left sides are formed by another hand that grips the first hand's wrist. This formal grouping casts a shadow

that overlaps one of three boxes that dominate the painting's middle ground. These three boxes act as frames that define and confine different kinds of illusionistic strategies and imagery. The shadow not only links the form of the box with the triangulation of fragmented hands and bloody knife, it also suggests another form represented in the top right corner of the painting: the profile of a woman's face in the shape of a pitcher. This image of a woman/jug is an integral part of Dalí's pictorial vocabulary of this period and connects feelings of fear and repulsion to the image of a woman. In *The Interpretation of Dreams,* Freud identified the jug or pitcher as a symbol for female sexuality: woman as container of liquid/semen. The red paint that describes the blood on the knife is echoed in the handle of the pitcher—a repetition that further connects these two forms.

Here is one of the representational ambivalences in *Illumined Pleasures*: though we would expect to get a chill from the blood-stained knife, there is something enticing about its potential significance and the way it visually connects us to other forms in the painting. The viewer is ushered into a violent scene, only to find nothing concretely sinister and much that is merely mundane. Suddenly we are made to question the meaning of what we thought we knew. Not only that, our inability to assign meaning to predominant images and groups of images (that speak as one) makes these assemblages come off as troubling and elusive rather than "illuminating." The engaged viewer's desire for satisfaction—insight or understanding—is

inhibited. Ultimately, like the proverbial sexual tease, rather than offering satisfaction, the painting keeps the viewer's desire in play.

In the box linked to the bloody knife by shadow, a man stands in the foreground wearing a dark suit and top hat. He stretches out his left arm in the direction of a building façade suggestive of one of de Chirico's painted buildings. Muted tones of pink, grey and brown predominate the scene with one exception: a bright irregular-shaped orb hovers in the boxes center. This unidentifiable form, which appears elsewhere in *Illumined Pleasures* and in other paintings in this series, is pure Dalí— inscrutable yet oddly familiar. A smear of red paint on this unidentifiable object catches the viewer's attention as does the bright whiteness of the overall form. To the right of the box is a column of collaged and painted images including the head of a bird that recalls Lop-Lop, Ernst's alter ego. To the right of this column is the largest box, which contains Dalí's self-portrait against a bright blue background below a grasshopper that in Dalí's lexicon symbolizes terror. "Even today," Dalí wrote in his autobiography, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*:

> if I were on the edge of a precipice and a large grasshopper sprang upon me and fastened itself to my face, I should prefer to fling myself over the edge rather than endure this frightful thing. [25]

Once his classmates realized that grasshoppers frightened Dalí, they terrorized him by catching and placing the insect in his books.

In a third box, the repeated form of a bearded man wearing a suit and

riding a bicycle with an egg or rock on his head creates a pattern that runs diagonally from right to left. The bicyclists ride on collision courses conveying the sense of impending disaster. The forms follow the rules of linear and atmospheric perspective by decreasing in size from front to back and by becoming less delineated as they recede from foreground to background. Both of these illusionistic strategies contribute to the impression of deep space within this box, and to the space of this box as separate from the rest of the painting.

In each of the components that structure *Illumined Pleasures*, Dalí employed variations on Renaissance and Baroque illusionistic strategies. The ground on which the bicyclists ride, for example, has an exaggerated tilt that gives the spectator the impression of a swift incline. As Ades indicated, this type of perspective was used in Baroque theater design:

> Accelerated perspective dramatized distance by contracting the diminution of scale and raising the horizon, and was a device often used in sixteenth-century theatrical scenery to create an illusion of depth on a shallow stage. In adopting this device on a rectangular two-dimensional canvas Dalí produces a perspective so emphatic as almost to caricature itself: 'the clever tricks of a paralyzing foreshortening.'[26]

Ades described Dalí's use of traditional illusionistic strategies as "a means to create not the illusion of a real scene but the reality of illusions." She connects him to the Baroque scopic regime:

> Dalí recognized that the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theories of perspective were wrestling with the problem of marrying empirical observation of the natural world with the

> belief in a world beyond it. Reality, in other words, was a contestable issue, and such inventions as anamorphic perspective, as we shall see, posited a 'hidden reality' which was to suggest analogies with the unknowable of the unconscious.[27]

The bottom edge of the panel, which features two cropped shadows, suggests unidentified figures lurking just outside the space represented in the box—another source of anxiety for a viewer trying to understand the meaning within the frame. These non-referential shadows add to the panel's atmosphere of impending danger. If there is pleasure here, it is a pleasure found in uncertain and even threatening situations. In his article, "Surrealist Precipitates," Denis Hollier explores the deep interest shadows held for Dalí and other surrealists. Traditionally cast shadows were "the very exemplar of a nondisplaceable sign: rigorously contemporary with the object it doubles, it is simultaneous, nondetachable, and, because of this, without exchange-value."[28] Dalí's shadows "reintroduce ambiguity in the only sign that escapes it" and by failing to protect shadow from equivocation, according to Hollier, become a source of pleasure:

> Pleasure (use-value) is thus literally a break in communication. For it's not a question of agreeable sensations that would become incommunicable beyond a certain threshold; rather, pleasure is the result of incommunicability itself; the unexchangeable is what gives rise to the enjoyment that is the most characteristic feature of use-value.[29]

In addition to the orphan shadows—what Hollier defines as "shadows detached from their indexical origins, shadows cut off from their cause,

shadows thrown by an invisible object, shadows of objects repressed outside the frame"[30]—Dalí subverted shadow's normal function in other ways. For example, shadows *with* referents in *Illumined Pleasures* also inhibit understanding. Outlined in bright white paint, they can be read as both shadow (the index of a presence) or as black holes (emptiness). Dalí reinforces this reading of shadow as both presence and emptiness in several ways. For example, if we apply this double reading to the male figure on the right (represented as leaning against the large center box) his shadow can be read as a peep-hole that would make the inside of the box available for viewing. The play between presence (shadow as indexical reference to the man) and absence (the hole) is sustained by the irregular-shaped orb resting on the horizon line. A large hole in this orb seems to give the viewer access to its dark interior. However, the painted reference to "inside," reads both as empty (hole) or full (presence). For the viewer, satisfaction does not depend on identification of individual objects. The title of the painting, *Illumined Pleasures*, implies a theme of pleasure that has been brought to light. This pleasure stems from the disconnection of pleasure from illumination (communication) and locates satisfaction in the very act of looking.

I am using *Illumined Pleasures* to begin to map how paranoiac thinking works in a Dalí painting: each form has many possible meanings, and the more you look the more you read into each form, group of forms and into the

groupings as they relate to one another. Moreover, *Illumined Pleasures* is a good example of how, like Bataille, Dalí insists on the arbitrariness of basing meaning on convention. In this painting, Dalí took as his subject the connection between pleasure and looking, and the resultant unreliability of vision as a means of determining truth, authenticity and accountability. Pleasure by definition is essentially subjective—a status which irretrievably locates it in the realm of the particular, a terrain far removed from the transcendent values celebrated by mainstream modernist artists and artwriters. Dalí builds ambivalence and contradiction into the very fabric of his representations as a means to keep desire in play—leaving the viewer in doubt is an accomplishment. The relative strength of any Dalí painting is its equivocation.

In *The Accommodations of Desire* [Fig. 25], a similar landscape setting structures the painting. A tiny fortress at the top left corner suggests deep space and gives way to a sliver of sky that defines the painting's top edge. The landscape—as we discussed above in regard to *Illumined Pleasures*—is a mix of individual objects, figures and compartments that separate and contain related forms. De Chirico's compartmentalized space is again used to structure the landscape setting. This time, though, the gentle curves of irregular oval-shaped containers replace the hard-edged boxes of *Illumined Pleasures*.

Inside each of the compartments in *The Accommodations of Desire*,

Dalí features a different image. He transforms a realistically painted snarling mouth of a lion in one enclosure into a lion's head in the next. In another chamber, the shadow of this head rendered in red paint adjoins a compartment containing a lion's head with no face. The most striking of these enclosures is smaller and darker than the others. It teems with ants that Dalí configured in this and other paintings of the period to suggest female genitalia. This imagery is first seen in the palm of a hand in the film, *Un Chien Andalou* [Fig. 39] and in a gouache, ink and collaged photograph on veneer, *The Ants* (1929) [Fig. 40].

In the background, on a low platform, a naked young man embraces a bearded older man, who has a hand raised to his mouth. On the platform with them is the head of a lion with a human hand pressed to its mouth. Just in front of these forms a bearded man holds his head in his hands in a gesture suggestive of guilt or shame. In light of Dalí's work of this period, the hands stroking the mouths of the bearded man and the lion suggest auto-eroticism. This theme is reinforced by two forms in the adjacent compartment: a naked woman's lower torso with a lion in place of her genitalia and the image of a large hand suggestively positioned beside it.

Dalí navigates the transitions in *The Accommodations of Desire* with such an astonishing naturalness and fluency that the viewer is almost unaware of them. The strategy compels us to associate these forms, and to find meaning in their repetition, absence and presence. Dalí does not flesh

out figures. He sets up a fabric of form from which meanings emerge. He uses visual logic to show logical thinking's irrational, artificial, inauthentic side. He layers and thickens meaning by revealing and concealing, by setting up a chain of associations and denying any possibility of a single way of looking. He builds up potential meanings only to break them down.

The Accommodations of Desire made its American debut in 1938 at an exhibition called *The Painters of Still Life* at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum in Hartford, Connecticut. In a catalogue essay for the year 2000 Dalí exhibition at the Wadsworth, Eric M. Zafran described Dalí's participation in what in 1938 was the most concentrated assemblage of surrealist art ever exhibited in America:

> In the company of Breughel, Chardin, Meléndez, Monet, Picasso, and other old and new masters were to be found examples by Magritte, Miró, Roy, Arp and Joseph Cornell. By Dalí there was the somewhat unexpected *The Accommodations of Desires* [sic], a key painting of 1929 that had belonged to André Breton and was now owned by Julien Levy. [A. Everett "Chick"] Austin and his co-organizer Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., in their joint introduction, which was also printed in *Art News*, claimed that with the advent of surrealism: 'The object in the startling guise of *dream object* rose on the analogy of a Freudian parable.' The Dalí was one of the few works illustrated in the catalogue, where it was noted, 'The Catalan Dalí at present the avowed pictorial leader of the surrealist movement, makes concrete the poetic irrationalities of the dream-world with the aid of a microscopic technique related to that of the seventeenth century Dutch painters of still-life.[31]

Illumined Pleasures and *The Accommodations of Desire* are evocative and complex weavings of the interrelated themes of Dalí's art of his early

surrealist period. They both address the hypocritical repression of certain erotic theses drawn from psychoanalysis—the Oedipal conflict, auto-eroticism, voyeurism and sado-masochism—which conditioned high culture in Europe and America in the late 1920s and 30s. Dalí maneuvered his way into a censoring art world, which in some ways anticipated today's international art scene. His work addressed conventional power structures, especially those that dictated sexual norms. His notion of the erotic, which he resolutely linked to vision, placed him between the extremes of social repression and artistic celebrity.

In the painting of 1929, *Le Jeu lugubre (The Lugubrious Game),* which flamed the conflict between Bataille and Breton, Dalí depended on a strong internal organization complicated by echoes and references to the Oedipal conflict and narcissisum. As is often the case with Dalí, significance is found here at the very limits of the acceptable. He juxtaposes fantastic grandiosity with precision of detail as a means to negotiate the shift between reality and illusion. Again, he represents the form of a dream or a serial narrative in which episodes are woven together by threads of similar intensity, focus and bearing. He builds this condition into the formal structure and iconographical references themselves.

In traditional painting, the single vanishing point is used to convey a particular point of view and a stable cosmos as seen by the subject. The multiple and conflicting vanishing points represented in this trenchant

painting address something different: a keen awareness and exploration of the confusion underlying narcissisum. In his essay, "Paranoiac Space," Victor Burgin wrote:

> In the classical mimetic theories of representation which dominated Western thought before modernism, the image was a mirror of reality—not of any contingent reality but an ordered reality, the anticipation of a perfected reality. Today that mirror has shattered. Its fragments, perpetually in motion, reflect nothing reassuring. The psychoanalytic concept of the mirror stage...has alerted us to the importance of our relation to the image in the formation of a coherent identity out of pre-Oedipal fragmentation and disorganization.[32]

The structure of *Le Jeu lugubre* is based on a contradictory dynamic that begins with the title, itself a "disarticulation" by virtue of the paradoxical juxtaposition of "game" and "lugubrious." It is oxymoronic inasmuch as games are associated with joy rather than mourning, and mourning with withdrawal rather than the overt reaching out of an enormous hand toward the center of the painting, and the playfulness of a number of the other forms. Dalí's representation of a figure on a high plinth fails to inspire admiration or even confidence. Instead it proclaims that fame, death and the passage of time may turn men into statues, but beware of polished perfection. Heroic images too often leave out the turmoil, inconsistencies and wrong turns life engenders. Specifically, the explosive central configuration embodies the throb and groping confusion of life.

Dalí's fascination with the lugubrious, and his linking of eroticism and death, is well documented. In an interview with Louis Pauwels he elaborated:

> ...my passion for death is double, naturally governed by human ambivalence. I desire it, and flee from it, I love it and yet it frightens me. But if the ultimate day cannot be avoided, I expect a sort of sublime orgasm when...all the accumulated eroticism will explode and go off with an unheard of violence and sweetness. And in this orgasm, all the hyperconscious I have fabricated within me will burst forth, shooting towards heaven with the speed of lightning, like a seed which shoots forth far from its protective covering.[33]

The structure of the painting as a whole embodies ambivalence, eroticism, confusion and violence while it rejects any notion of inevitability. Dalí never nails down a hard-and-fast message. The work stays slippery, oblique and suggestive. It organizes the infinity of space into the strict yet playful order of finitude. *Le Jeu lugubre* is a painting without a center, a world where substitution and transposition govern, and images proliferate in a seemingly endless chain. In the midground of the painting, a variety of unidentifiable forms seems to explode from and circulate above the representation of an extended torso. Human and animal heads, a fragment of a finger, hats, a chalice, a Eucharistic host and an umbrella are among the objects depicting the body's anomalous head. In the overall structure and in formal combinations, we see a mixture of delight and dread, attraction and repulsion, pleasure and pain that recall Dalí's eroticized description of death.

Dalí designed the forms in *Le Jeu lugubre* to elicit multiple readings.

The lines that figure the mouth of the male head also represent a vagina; and the fragmented finger to the left of the woman's head also depicts her upraised and bent right arm. In rhetorical terms, these kinds of ambivalent forms introduce complexity by interjecting multiple and not always congruent significations. Like the metaphor of a metaphor this process is a throwing next to or beside. It is an acknowledgement, a knowing beside, a recognition of one thing as also something other. In Dalí's representational lexicon, these forms—which demand to be read as one thing and another—are paranoid images.

Dalí has been repressed from modernism because he thwarts its call for form to operate with optical logic. This brings him into the realm of what Jean-Francois Lyotard calls *matrix*, a hidden third term (neither figure nor ground).[34] Dalí's paranoiac images are flickering—always on the verge of breaking up. They do not convey the separateness of figure and ground that expresses timeliness and pure *presence*. Instead they connect the viewer's eye to the rhythm or pulse of the body. *Le Jeu lugubre* is less an elusive puzzle than a cannily orchestrated mélange of painted and collaged forms that make vivid illogical sense to the viewer and then linger on in the memory with the depth and tantalizing inevitability of violent cramps experienced by the paranoiac who suspects s/he's been poisoned.

In his highly sophisticated and carefully structured mental landscape, *The Great Masturbator* [Fig. 36], Dalí explored themes related to the

paranoiac experience: the presence of the irrational in the rational; the contingent nature of truth; and desire as the source of both pleasure and pain. In this suggestively titled painting, a golden arcane form fills most of the canvas. Its over-developed nose, suppressed mouth, and eyelashes as long as whiskers are key forms in Dalí's self-portraits of the period. The atmosphere of uncertainty created by jarring scale dissociations, confusing object juxtapositions, and portentous shadows accentuates the vulnerability of the imposing yet passive creature. Painted objects (at once realistic and metamorphosizing into impossible physical states) achieve an almost hallucinatory formal clarity. Taken as a whole, the structural, formal and stylistic characteristics of the painting express eroticism, aggression, and vulnerability. In this way, *The Great Masaturbator* conveys the tension inherent in the paranoiac experience.

The dominant theme of this painting is enervating sexual anxiety. Dalí insinuates a feeling of unease provoked by the subject's ambivalent response to desire. Paranoid fantasies bring with them pleasure and pain: the extravagant pleasure of giving oneself over to a desire that carries with it shame and humiliation. A series of provocative forms reinforces this theme. The phallic-shaped grasshopper anchored to the effaced mouth of the central figure is conjoined with that of a fish. This dyad is a humiliating association for Dalí. He related it to a childhood experience of finding a fish called a "slobberer" that to him looked shockingly like a grasshopper. In the

painting, a fishhook penetrates the self-portrait head.[35] This is one of many choices Dalí makes to reinforce the theme of eroticized aggression and vulnerability. Another is the long red tongue protruding from the mouth of a miniature lion's head. Located near the painting's center, the abnormally long appendage lasciviously extends toward and is echoed by a stamen rod projecting from the cleft of an arum lily. The shapes and colors of the red tongue and gold stamen contribute to the hot-house atmosphere of the painting. Meanwhile, the folds of the arum lily at once suggest lips and a curvaceous pair of legs gracefully bending together. The golden rod directs the viewer's eye toward the sculptural form of a feminine head and shoulders.[36] The hair of the woman echoes and takes a step further the lip/leg dual-reading of the folds of the arum lily. Her head tilts up toward another carnal form: the swelling penis of a scantily-clothed man with bloody legs. These forms blatantly suggest the act of *fellatio* while their cool marble-like finish combines with a barren landscape to counter the erotic dramatization.

Many scholars have associated the painting's imagery with Freud's castration complex and Dalí's repressed homosexual desire.[37] At the time Dalí painted *The Great Masturbator*, Ades contends, he was "locked in the auto-eroticism and masturbation of the previous years." She has written that Dalí referred to this painting as "the expression of my heterosexual anxiety."[38] His work on it coincided with falling in love with Gala Eluard,

who had accompanied her husband, Paul Eluard, André Breton and other members of the surrealist group on their pilgrimage to meet Dalí at his home in Cadaqués, Spain. During the first days of September 1929, she remained with Dalí when her husband returned to Paris. It was after Gala left that Dalí put the finishing touches to *The Great Masturbator*. Ades suggests that this painting may reflect Dalí's concern about his sexuality: before meeting Gala, a fear of homosexuality preoccupied him; after, his anxiety continued but turned on the fear of impotence. In *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*, Gibson firmly linked the content of Dalí's paintings to his sexual fears and experiences.[39] Lubar acknowledges the presence of these themes in Dalí's oeuvre and cautions against purely biographical interpretations:

> ...Dalí's onanistic fantasies and his presumed incapacity to achieve sexual gratification with women (until, we are told, Gala emerges on the scene and 'rescues' Dalí from his perversions) are related to repressed homosexual desire;....This emphasis on psychological transparency, however, fails to acknowledge the full extent to which Dalí consciously constructed a mythic persona through the practice of biographical narrative, interpreting his own experience through the established grid of psychoanalysis. If Dalí's Freudian critics find guilt, repression, and castration anxiety in his work, it is because Dalí *put it there* as a subject of representation.[40]

In *The Enigma of Desire—My Mother, My Mother, My Mother (L'énigme du désir—ma mère, ma mère, ma mère)* [Fig. 37], Dalí evokes the psychoanalytic themes of guilt, shame and castration anxiety by referencing the mysteries of the mother-child relationship. In the foreground he again represents the foetus-like form that is his self-portrait of the period. Its side-

parted pommaded hairstyle, prominent nose, and arched eyebrow look like the features of the artist in photographs taken around this time. The softness of the image—a face in profile—gives it a distinct vulnerability as does a single large tightly shut eye. The small foetal form bears a distinct resemblance to the large central image of *The Great Masturbator*, which he painted the same year. From the small self-portrait extends a colossal superstructure that remarkably calls to mind both the rocks around Cape Creus on the coast of Cadequés and a thick slice of Swiss cheese. "From the prolonged contemplation of [Cape Creus's] metamorphoses," Gibson claimed, "was to come Dalí's obsession with the double image, one of the hallmarks of his mature art."[41] Centuries of rains and the traumuntana, Gibson writes, "have sculpted the mica-schist into weird shapes that, as one watches, no sooner assume the form of, say, a phantasmagoric bird or animal than they turn into a wrinkled human profile, a fairy palace or a clump of tropical vegetation. Creus is a vast natural theatre of optical illusions."[42] Inside this ponderous appendage, Dalí painted compartments of differing depth. In many of these spaces he wrote the words "ma mère."

The dry claustrophobic look of *The Enigma of Desire* conveys erotic promise in a manner that will not surprise viewers familiar with *Le Jeu lugubre*. In these works he presents sex as messianic and future-oriented—a yearning for unity and for the body of the mother. *The Enigma of Desire* encourages us to suspect that the subject lacks something most other adults

have: the carapace which grows or solidifies around them as they get older, and which involves an increasing lack of uncertainty about, or interest in, anything they don't already know.

The fragmentation of another painting of 1929, *Portrait of Paul Eluard* [Fig. 38], forces the viewer to scan the canvas restlessly without finding an opening into depth or a focal point. Dalí capitalized on his skill as a miniaturist to accumulate a wealth of imagery on the surface of the painting. A haunting photo-realist likeness of Eluard looms in the sky above the undifferentiated plain found in other Dalí works of this period. It was painted at the time Eluard's wife, Gala, left him for Dalí. Eluard's letters to Gala, which she certainly shared with Dalí, graphically reveal Gala's sexual preferences. I cite a portion of one of the letters here because of its relationship to the iconography in Eluard's portrait and to other Dalí paintings in this series.

> I need you so much. It's driving me mad. I die at the idea of being with you again, of seeing you, of kissing you. I want your hands, your mouth, your sex joined to mine, constantly. We'll masturbate each other in the street, in the cinemas, with the window open. This morning I masturbated wonderfully thinking about you. My imagination never stops. I see you everywhere, in everything, on everything. I love you so much I could die of it. Your cunt covers my face, eats it, covers me with your beauty, with your genius. Everything about you is beautiful: your eyes, your mouth, your hair, your breasts, your body hair, your buttocks, your cunt, your hands which never let go what they're masturbating, the space between your thighs, near your cunt, your shoulders. I go crazy when I think about each part of your body.[43]

In Dalí's *Portrait of Eluard,* the back of a female hand rests on Eluard's forehead. It is painted in grisaille as is a small female head—which resembles Gala—that appears attached to Eluard's ear. The woman's expression is so perfidious that she seems a figment out of some paranoid male fantasy. From beneath the hand, part objects escape which suggest the female genitalia and the legs and wing of a preying mantis, the insect that the surrealists identified with male-devouring females. A striking photocollage portrait of Gala on cardboard with deckled edges of 1931 also connects Gala's image to the preying mantis [Fig. 41]. A finger on the other hand of the woman in *Portrait of Eluard* probes the body of a preying mantis that extends from Dalí's self-portrait, here represented with razor-sharp teeth that call to mind the psychoanalytic concept of a *vagina dentata,* a form that reinforces the notion of a dangerous female presence. In *The Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus,* Dalí relates "the expectant attitude of the woman" to the preying mantis, which he elaborates with photographs and illustrations of the insect [Fig. 42 and 43]. Opposite the latter, Dalí cites J. H. Fabre's *Customs of the Insects:*

> To eat one's lover after the marriage has been consummated, to make a meal of the exhausted dwarf, henceforward good for nothing, this is understandable to a certain extent with insects that are scarcely scrupulous in sentimental matters; but to munch on him during the act, this surpasses anything that even the most atrocious imagination could dream of. I have seen it, with my own eyes, and I have not yet recovered from my surprise...[44]

Under a cartoon in the March 30, 1890 issue of *Le Courrier Francais* [Fig. 44], which in *The Tragic Myth of the Angelus* Dalí labels "The complex of impotence," he writes, "Gala in reality took the place of my mother to whom I owe my terror of the sexual act...."[45]

In the upper right corner of *The Portrait of Eluard* is the face of a woman represented with an insane grin—this face reappears in the form of a handled jug, Freud's symbol of female sexuality. A lion's head—which in *The Accommodations of Desire* clearly represented female genitalia—here unites the crazed woman's head and Eluard. Eluard had encouraged a relationship between Gala and Dalí and there is evidence to suggest that the three engaged in sexual activities together. In 1930 Dalí provided the frontispiece for *L'Immaculée Conception* by Eluard and Breton. A dedication from the authors reads:

> Jusqu'à nouvel ordre, jusqu'à nouvel order monastique, c'est-à-dire jusqu'à ce que les plus belles jeunes femmes adoptent le décolleté en croix: les deux branches horizontales découvrant les seins, le pied de la croix nue au bas du ventre, légèrement roussi.
>
> le plus clair de notre affection,
> Paul Eluard André Breton[46]

Although Dalí's portrait of Eluard could be interpreted as a document of Dalí's obsession with Gala—Dalí is in search of something deeper, more elemental and ultimately more elusive.

vii.

Auto-eroticism as a means of avoiding the tension inherent in relating to others is the theme of the painting *The Persistence of Memory* [Fig. 15] of 1931.[47] Enigmatically juxtaposed in the foreground are a plunging platform, flaccid timepieces, hard-bodies swarming ants, a translucent winged fly doubled by its shadow, and a slumbering fetal monster. The rubbery biomorph with over-developed nose and tongue and eyelashes as long as whiskers, recalls the central figure in *The Great Masturbator*, and may also be considered a self-portrait. The vulnerability of this passive, gelatinous figure is accentuated by the atmosphere of uncertainty created by perplexing scale dissociations and object juxtapositions, and conflicting vanishing points. Moreover, the sensuous curvilinear forms of the watches and the sleeping biomorphic creature juxtaposed with the angular contours of the plunging platforms express both erotic and aggressive impulses. The landscape, which couples extreme beauty and desolation, surreally mirrors Cape Creus—a parched, stony wasteland abutting a gorgeous turquoise sea.

An aggressively erotic tone pervades *The Persistence of Memory*. The slick finish and detailed realism, which allows an extraordinary concentration of imagery, are particularly suited to its small format—9 1/2" x 13." Moreover, the meticulous rendering of jewel-like ants encrusted on an amber watchcase in the foreground recalls the realism of discredited academic painters like Meissonier who, as mentioned earlier, Dalí once claimed to

admire. That it can be viewed only by one spectator at a time and its meaning cannot be grasped even when the spectator gives it close scrutiny adds to the sense of *The Persistence of Memory* as the representation of an interior image, a sort of hand-painted dream. The miniature size of many of the painted objects invites close examination. Yet when meticulously rendered insects are among the most readily identifiable images, the viewer is simultaneously pulled toward and repulsed by the painting.[48] The paranoid quality of this work is in its very structure. Dalí established a pulse or rhythm between two modes of seeing: one excessively intimate, the other excessively detached. This permitted him here and in other paintings of this period to explore the fragile and shifting boundary between private and public space, home and the world, the irrational and the rational.

Dalí's paintings frequently call for the spectator to move between engaged and detached viewing positions. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the draw this sets up is analogous to Lacan's theory of the mirror stage, anticipated by his early work on paranoia.[49] The pivotal moment in the formation of the mirror stage is the child's consciousness of the absence of the mother, which triggers recognition of self-*in*sufficiency. Only now can the child begin to distinguish itself from objects in the outside world. Lacan argued that the genesis of the narcissistic ego coincides with the child's substitution of auto-erotic pleasure for the lost belief in a state of self-sufficient bliss. Desire for the other, according to Lacan, generates a

knowledge that is paranoiac in that it is both absolute and arbitrary, and it is divided between recognition and misrecognition.

In *The Persistence of Memory*, the erasure of boundaries—the collapse of hard and soft, of biological and man-made, of the real and the imaginary—recalls a point in time when the subject believed itself to be self-contained and autonomous, a time before realization of dependency on others. The pleasure driving the impulse to see, Dalí insists, is always accompanied by the pain of recognition of our dependence on others. From this standpoint, Dalí's version of aesthetic insight conflicts with modernism's autonomous and transcendent aims. *The Persistence of Memory* reminds us of the way visual perception can confuse us and of the fears that accompany this confusion. Here Dalí embodies his own version of the sublime in several ways including the setting up of an oscillation between what is soft and solid, what is organic inorganic, what is real and imaginary.

In an essay published in the May 1933 issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, Dalí described a man who dreamily contemplates a luminous point in the sky, which he takes to be a star. In the next instant, he realizes that the glowing object is not a star at all, but rather it is the end of a lit cigarette. At the moment he recognizes the lit cigarette butt, someone tells him that what he first thought was a star, and then took to be merely burning ash is, in fact, the only visible point of an immense "psycho-atmospheric-anamorphic object," which among other essential elements

contains the authentic skulls of Richard Wagner and Ludwig II of Bavaria.[50] This scenario, which calls into question the adequacy of vision, recalls the "lawless chaos of appearances" recognized by Frederick von Schiller in his essay, "On the Sublime." One of the first thinkers of consequence affected by Kant's aesthetics of sublimity, Schiller argued that a rationally governed cosmos gave way to an inward contemplation that suggested the world's disorder, the role of chance, and the most irrational unconscious. Schiller rejected Kant's *a priori* principles, and claimed instead that the issue of truth is represented in the realm of aesthetic possibility by an attitude he referred to as "aesthetic play." The flexibility of aesthetic play at once recognizes the impossibility of a delineated absolute reality and allows a dynamic interaction of fact and imagination in order to redefine "reality" and "truth." My association of Dalí's paranoiac-critical method with the sublime may help to shed light on Dalí's uneasy relationship to the dominant version of modernism, which privileges instantaneity, simultaneity, universality and timelessness while celebrating and repressing, in turn, a recognition of the impossibility of their achievement. What has been repressed, what is sublime by virtue of its position below the modernist threshold, characterizes Dalí's surrealist visual and textual production.

In *"L'Ane Pourri"* [The Rotten Donkey]," published in the first issue of *Le surréalisme au service de la revolution* (July 1930), Dalí claimed that objects like the star/cigarette are obtained by a process of paranoiac thought,

which may be extended "until there is a number of images limited only by the mind's degree of paranoiac capacity."[51] In pictorial terms, as seen in his drawing, *Invisible Sleeping Woman, Horse, Lion* (1930) [Fig. 45], the image of a horse can at the same time represent the image of a woman and the image of a lion. The unstable meaning of this configuration disregards modernist expectations of adequacy of gaze to object, and of object or phenomenon to the preconditioned and programmatic ideologies of representation. Thus, Dalí's paranoiac-critical method suggests a demystification of modernist ideals by calling into question the modernist belief in the potential of representation as adequate to the task of perception or, failing that, the paradoxical celebration of its impossible inadequacy. That instant when one meaning of a single form gives way to another—the unthinkable moment when the form is neither this nor that—is the liminal site of Dalí's counter-move to the modernist sublime.

Dalí admired the peculiar vision of his mentally unbalanced neighbor in Cadaqués, Lydia Nogales. He remarked that "she was capable of establishing completely coherent relations between any subject whatsoever and her obsession of the moment with sublime disregard of everything else, and with a choice of detail and a play of wit so subtle and so calculatingly resourceful that it was often difficult not to agree with her on questions which one knew to be utterly absurd." She interpreted newspaper articles, he tells us, "with such felicitous discoveries of coincidence and plays on

words that one could not fail to wonder at the bewildering imaginative violence with which the paranoiac spirit can project the image of our inner world upon the outer world, no matter where or in what form or on what pretext."[52]

Dalí's acknowledgment of his admiration for "the sublime disregard" of Lydia Nogales is another way he distances himself from a vigorous modernist discourse that celebrates rationality, essences and purifications. Dalí went against the grain not by representing what the history of modernism left out but by embodying what has always been there operating below the threshold, literally in sublimity. Its logic, rationality, essences and purifications, he seems to have been proclaiming, were only masks.

viii.

The Phenomenon of Ecstasy (1933) [Fig. 46], a collage of nearly fifty separate photographs, addresses Dalí's appreciation of the surrealist spirit of convulsive creation and suggests his phrase "anamorphic hysteria." He called secret desires the true future and life of the mind and believed desire was by its very nature perverse, base and contemptible.[53] Yet as far as Dalí was concerned, the only sin was to repress desire. The largest and most centrally located of the photographs features a woman who does indeed suggest a state of ecstasy: eyes closed, lips open and head thrust back she appears to be both sexually avid and sexy. Above her is a series of close-up

photographs of a male right ear, which are very clearly just that. Yet formally their shape and shadows reference the cavities and folds of female genitalia. Other photos in the collage suggest women in the midst of making love or fantasizing about it. A single armless chair tilted like the female head diagonally above it sustains and encourages the sense of the subject's state of agitation. Ades connected Dalí's "anamorphic hysteria" to Lacan's association of hysteria to the 'fragmented body':

> ...or the division of the body into an 'imaginary anatomy.' The hysteric may be haunted by 'images of castration, emasculation, mutilation, dismemberment, dislocation, evisceration, devouring, bursting open of the body' --all of which are present in Dalí's work.[54]

Ades cites the definition of hysteria found in Dylan Evans *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*:

> Whereas obsessional neurosis concerns the question of the subject's existence, hysteria concerns the question of the subject's sexual position. This question may be phrased 'Am I a man or a woman?', or more precisely, 'What is a woman?'

Dalí also addresses the subject of hysteria in his commentary on Millet's painting, the *Angélus* (1858-9):

> Besides the well known symbolic eroticism of mystic ecstasies to which the attitude of the woman in the *Angélus* corresponds, everyone will concede that the position of the hands clasped together under the chin, which especially exposes the legs and stomach, is an attitude frequently seen, even stereotyped in the hysterical poses of sculptures and particularly in 'objets d'art' found in junk shops. The nostalgia that they express is in proportion to the crepuscular feelings that are illustrated prolifically on postcards where nudes in the same attitude stand out from the sunsets in the background. This attitude, as far as I am concerned, probably

> involves an exhibitionistic factor, an expectant factor and a factor of aggression all very clearly defined. Indeed, it is a question of the typical position of expectation. It is the immobility which is a prelude to imminent violence.[55]

The *Angélus* appeared regularly in Dalí's texts and paintings of the 1930s. He had been familiar with the painting since his childhood—there was a reproduction of it in the hallway of the Marist Brothers School in Figueres. His obsession with it began in 1932 when he had a vision that severely disturbed him: "In June, 1932, the image of the *Angélus* of Millet suddenly appeared in my mind without any recent recollection or conscious association to offer an immediate explanation.[56]

What primarily impressed Dalí was the way the *Angélus* had captured the popular imagination in France and abroad. Reproductions of Millet's original were widely available and its imagery was the theme of mass-produced objects ranging from inkwells to tea sets [Fig. 47]. Dalí believed the ubiquity of the *Angélus* deserved consideration:

> Nothing is more striking from a materialistic point of view than the indifference and total lack of consideration given to that unique 'phenomenon' of its kind: the obsessive power that the apparently insignificant image of the *Angélus* of Millet has exercised throughout the 'entire world', and on the imagination of crowds.[57]

In *The Tragic Myth of Millet's 'Angélus'* (1932-3)—an erotic description and paranoiac-critical interpretation of Millet's painting—Dalí elaborated on its significance:

> This image was composed of a very clear visual representation and was in colour. It was almost instantaneous and was not followed by other images. It left me with a profound impression, I was most upset by it, because, although in my vision of the aforementioned image everything 'corresponded' exactly to the reproductions that I knew of the picture, it nevertheless 'appeared to me' absolutely modified and charged with such a latent intentionality that the *Angélus* of Millet suddenly became for me the most troubling of pictorial works, the most enigmatic, the most dense, the richest in unconscious that had ever existed.[58]

Half-a-dozen of his paintings from the 1930s represent variations on the theme of the *Angélus* including *Gala and the Angelus of Millet Preceding the Imminent Arrival of the Conical Anamorphoses* (1933) [Fig. 48] and *The Angelus of Gala* (1935) [Fig. 49]. In the latter painting, Dalí portrays Gala sitting in a wheelbarrow, a form echoed in Dalí's altered representation of Millet's *Angelus*. This woman-in-a-wheelbarrow motif appears in an undated French postcard, "Baiser en Brouette," [Fig. 50] and in French cartoons [Fig. 51] which Dalí used to illustrate the text of *The Tragic Myth.* Although the manuscript was not printed until 1963, he mentioned it in a letter to a friend in early 1933. Moreover, the May 15, 1933 issue of *Le Surréalisme au service de la revolution* announced its upcoming release and the June 1933 issue of *Minotaure* published a theoretical prologue with six illustrations. A short text by Dalí entitled, "*L'Angélus* de Millet," appeared in the catalogue essay for his exhibition, "Salvador Dalí: Les Chants de Maldoror" in Paris in 1934.[59] Dalí's *The Tragic Myth of Millet's 'Angélus'*—which sets up the painting as a universal cultural myth comparable to Freud's Oedipal

complex—is indebted to Freud's essay, "Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood" (1910). Dalí interpreted the female peasant in Millet's painting as a menace of mythological significance:

> ...the maternal variant of the grandiose, atrocious myth of Saturn, of Abraham, of the Eternal Father with Jesus Christ and of William Tell himself—all devouring their sons.[60]

Lubar summarizes the sinister aspect of the female as intepreted by Dalí:

> In Dalí's reading, a latent content of castration and death is symbolically encoded in the painting....Observing that the male peasant in Millet's painting is smaller in size than his wife Dalí imagines a complex scenario of predatory female aggression, in which the woman, piously bowing her head in prayer, assumes the form of a praying mantis (in captivity, the female of the species is known to devour its partner during or immediately following mating). The wheelbarrow is in turn read as a kind of sexual surrogate, while the basket marks the grave of the couple's dead son.[61]

Many years after Dalí documented his theory about the *Angélus,* an examination by conservators in the laboratory at the Louvre did indeed reveal that it had been overpainted in the space where the dead child's casket was envisioned by Dalí. As Lubar noted:

> When years later the painting was x-rayed, Dalí was elated to learn that conservators had discovered an area of overpainting beneath the basket. Dalí took this as confirmation of his view that the basket marks the site of a child's grave. Dalí then provides indisputable 'proof' of his interpretation in the form of photographs, postcards, and popular illustrations that set into motion and subsequently document the secondary delirious phenomena.[62]

The uneasy mixture of the spiritual and the predatory present in the *Angélus* is apparent in Dalí's painting of 1936, *Morphological Echo* [Fig. 52].

It is a part of a series dependent on formal repetition painted by Dalí during the mid-1930s. A draped table, fills the foreground of the painting. On it rests three miniature objects: a transparent glass with a fork or spoon projecting from inside, a crust of bread and a bunch of purple grapes. These forms are echoed first by objects in the middle distance and then by another three still further away. The similar shapes and tonality of the nine miniature forms encourage the viewer to draw associations between them. *Morphological Echo* exudes a tantalizing mix of the spiritual and the sensual.[63] The layered fabric calls to mind the billowing, crinkly robes enveloping Jesus, Mary or the saints in countless Baroque pictures as well as the rich fabrics still used in today's Roman Catholic liturgy. The bread and wine on the table suggest the part in a Catholic mass called "the Eucharistic Feast" or "Holy Communion" when the priest "transubstantiates" the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Dalí used the diminutive figures to clarify this association. For example, with little formal alteration the miniature shape behind the bunch of grapes on the table reads as the prone body of a man. Dalí deploys the magic of illusionism here to clarify an atmosphere of sacred ceremony. An aura of the miraculous-made-mundane conditions this painting as much as transgressive insistence on the undeniable cannibalistic innuendo of the liturgy. This allegorical painting makes disconcerting and tangible fictions of impalpable realms.

ix.

In 1937, the year after Lacan announced his formulation of the mirror stage at a psychoanalytic conference, Dalí painted *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus* [Fig. 23]. My interest here is in the relationship between the structurally irretrievable objects in this painting and what in "The Im/pulse to See," Krauss described as "a rhythm, or beat, or pulse—a kind of throb of on/off on/off on/off—which, in itself, acts against the stability of visual space in a way that is destructive and devolutionary."[64] According to Krauss, this beat or pulse "has the power to decompose and dissolve the very coherence of form on which visuality may be thought to depend." Nearly a decade later, in *Formless: A User's Guide*, which charts the persistence of Bataille's *informe* within the history of modernism and its presence within current art production, Krauss expands on the idea of the pulse. One of the examples she uses is the flicker film, which is produced by inserting blank frames between image frames. Its creators believed that the break in the filmic flow would allow the viewer to see beyond film's illusion of continuity to the basic unit of film, the single frame. However, although the flicker film's visible alternation between blank and image frames does indeed break the flow of motion, as Krauss notes:

> ...it cannot turn off the afterimage, which is produced by the viewer all the same. This phenomenon is even heightened, one might say, by the fact that the afterimage—projecting itself onto the visually 'empty' spaces provided by the 'flicker's' intermittancies of black leader—now has a place to exist within

> which it can be experienced as the ghostly counterpart to the passages of filmic representation. What we 'see' in those interstitial spaces is not the material surface of the 'frame,' nor the abstract condition of the cinematic 'field,' but the bodily production of our own nervous systems, the rhythmic beat of the neural network's feedback, of its 'retention'; and 'protention,' as the nerve tissue retains and releases its impressions.[65]

A similar pulsing movement structures Dalí's *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus*. For example, the head of the partially submerged figure on the left is in a perpetual state of fluctuation. From a single form, a series of viable objects including a nut, an egg and a bulb emerge one after another setting up a rhythm or pulse that pulls viewers in by clearing a space for us to project our own production. Moreover, in *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus*, the entire form of the figure itself dissolves as the left arm becomes an index finger and the knee and lower leg become the thumb on which the oval form rests. As a result, this painting depends for its meaning on the "afterimage" produced in the unconscious of the viewer. Each of the formally similar images in the painting modifies another thus setting up a network of associations and repetitions. Krauss notes that in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud connected repetition to "something that lies beyond pleasure, threatening it with violence—something that must therefore be identified with death.[66] Form in high art, according to Krauss "is constructed so as to ward off the violence of this beat, to achieve the permanence of the configuration, its imperviousness to assault."[67] Krauss locates the roots of

the modernist concern with "formal organization and mastery of the chaos and happenstance of visual appearance, the revelation of the rules for form beneath the clutter of perceived reality" in the late nineteenth century.

> An early version of these rules was pronounced in 1890 by Maurice Denis, according to which, before being anything else (such as the depiction of a battle horse or a nude), a painting needed to declare itself, he said, as a plane surface covered with colors assembled in a certain order. Although it would be refined and elaborated, this basic rule held steady over the entire course of modernist painting, for, if adhered to, it guaranteed that the ordered, planar surface would present itself as the analogue to the cognitive unity that underlies visual perception.[68]

In the throb of the revolving discs of Duchamp's *Precision Optics* (1935), Krauss saw an attack on the modernist myth of visual purity:

> ...his 'oculism' will hold up the modernist concern for visual purity to a gentle kind of mockery. For the throb of his revolving discs, pulsing as they do with erotic suggestiveness, opens the very concept of visual autonomy—of a form of experience that is wholly and purely optical, owing nothing to time—to the invasion of a sense of dense, corporeal pressure. Not simply because as the spirals swell and deflate they suggest a succession of organs, breast turning into eye turning into belly turning into womb, or even the pulse of erotic friction. But because the pulse itself, in its diastolic repetitiveness, associates itself with the density of nervous tissue, with its temporality of feedback, of response time, of retention and protension, of the fact that, without this temporal wave, no experience at all, visual or otherwise, could happen.[69]

Dalí's paranoiac imagery—represented in *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus* as the repetitive pulse of one form becoming another—connects visuality to the body and, like Duchamp's *Precision Optics*, undermines the modernist myth of visual purity. In *Formless: A User's Guide*, Krauss discussed Dalí's

connection to the *informe* in terms of the scatological representations in the painting, *Le Jeu Lugubre* and in his theorization of the "surrealist object."[70] Our understanding of the relationship between Dalí's paranoiac-critical imagery and the *informe* deepens when we consider this imagery in conjunction with the operation of "Pulse" as located by Krauss in flicker films and Duchamp's *Precision Optics*.

Paranoiac imagery structures another painting of the late 1930s, *Transparent Simulacrum of the Feigned Image* [Fig. 53]. The table in the foreground suggests the "Eucharistic Feast or Holy Communion" discussed in relation to *Morphological Echo*. Yet the "Eucharistic Feast" here is less about the body and blood of Christ than about expressing our deepest fears. The swath of fabric that gently drops over the edge of the table, which doubles as a barren stretch of beach, is one of the most suggestive forms in a Dalí painting. In her catalogue essay for the Hartford Athenaeum show, Ades noted the double reading of the draped cloth as a spread-winged bird. Its texture as much as its shape is far more provocative: the cloth visually "feels" labial and even vaginal, if we view its creases as swollen folds. Dalí juxtaposes this suggestive imagery with a looming mountainside rendered in earthy skin-tones of pink and brown. Into the looming mountain in similar color and intensity he faintly represents the top three-quarters of Gala's head. Her image is slow to come into focus, but once you have seen it you cannot forget its presence. Like Gala herself the portrait gives off an air of

sharpness and strength, and the staring eyes that meet yours suggests she knows something you don't. The low rolling hills on the horizon which Ades reads doubly as a "fruit dish" also resemble a premature newborn baby or foetus.

The elements of what was once a calming myth of maternal love glisten here like the fragments of a shattered mirror. Dalí uses the "pulse" of paranoiac imagery to represent the threat that lies just beyond the promise of satisfaction.

Dali's painting of 1938, *The Endless Enigma: The Image Disappears* [Fig. 54], grounds Marc J. LaFountain's argument that, beginning in the late 1920s, Dalí's pictorial and theoretical work, in particular his paranoiac-critical method, deconstructed the totalizing vision of Breton's surrealism. Dalí's insistence on multiple meanings, shifting identities, and continuous deferral results in a "con-fusion" defined by LaFountain as "a scene where conjunction, disjunction, and sublation coincide without convergence, destiny, or end," a scene where artifice holds sway over truth. LaFountain deems Dalí a "con-artist *extraordinaire,*" who used the tricks of that trade to shatter all collectivist goals. For LaFountain, against the "purity" of Bretonian surrealism, Dalí's *Endless Enigma* stands alone as a testament to his anti-totalitarianism. Following much of the recent commentary on Dalí's relationship with Breton, LaFountain situates the latter as a modernist concerned with reconciling dualities to arrive at what is essential to all

things.

LaFountain's thesis is that Breton was a dialectical thinker who sought resolution of the tension inherent in dualities while Dalí anticipated post-modernist tactics.[71] The focus of his study, *The Endless Enigma* drew crowds to the Julien Levy Gallery in Spring 1939. The public's enthusiastic response to the show played a significant role in what Lubar called "a massive publicity campaign in America" supported by Levy, Chick Austin of the Wadsworth Atheneum and Dalí's influential society friends. Lubar summarized the critical response to the exhibition:

> If *Life* magazine could report that 'for general popularity there hasn't been such an exhibit since Whistler's *Mother* was shown in 1934,' Dalí's astounding commercial success also drew sharp criticism. *Time* magazine begrudgingly observed, "In Manhattan last week, having had as much advance publicity as Ringling Bros., Salvador Dalí's new exhibition drew crowds that made the swank Julien Levy Gallery surge and prattle like the *Normandie* at sailing time.' More damning was Paul Bird's review for *Art Digest:* 'Salvador and his manager, Julien Levy, ride merrily along on the crest of the greatest art publicity campaign of the year....Dalí, of course, cares nothing about the art world. His profits are where the money is: department stores that cater to the chi-chi, café society of the insecure strata, and Hollywood.' [72]

By 1939, Dalí may have realized that he could do what he liked as long as he kept the public amused and distracted. The multiple image paintings of the late 1930s were becoming more elaborate and determined to impress. Lubar noted this tendency:

> ...as Dalí's visual gymnastics evolved, his paintings became more contrived and mannered. In the catalogue for his 1939

> show at the Julien Levy Gallery in New York (March 21-April 17), Dalí carefully diagrammed the presence of six distinct images in *The Endless Enigma,* which, despite the artist's best efforts, do not cohere into a unified *gestalt.* Indeed a month later André Breton publicly dismissed Dalí's recent work, effectively excommunicating him from the surrealist movement. 'Dalí's painting,' Breton declared in *Minotaure* magazine, 'is already being eroded by profound and absolute monotony. His determination to rarefy his paranoiac method still further has reduced him to concocting entertainments on the level of *crossword puzzles.*'[73]

More than half-a-century ago, Dalí tapped into the American obsession with self-promotion and entertainment. He became well-known outside art circles in America in 1936 when the cover of *Time* magazine [Fig. 55] featured a striking photograph of him:

> [O]n 10 December, the day after the opening of Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism [at MOMA], came the private view of Dalí's exhibition at [Julien] Levy's; and on 14 December, the event of the public opening, the artist received the ultimate accolade when a photograph of him by Man Ray appeared on the front cover of *Time:* 'Surrealist Salvador Dalí. A blazing pine tree, an Archbishop, a giraffe and a cloud of feathers went out the window', read the caption....In its inside pages *Time* reviewed the MOMA exhibition and provided a detailed and appreciative synopsis of Dalí's career to date. 'Surrealism,' it wrote, 'would never have attracted its present attention in the U.S. were it not for a handsome 32-year-old Catalan with a soft voice and a clipped cinemactor's moustache, Salvador Dalí.' This was true. The magazine added, with evident approval, that Dalí had 'a faculty for publicity that should turn any circus press agent green with envy.'[74]

Today the values of the entertainment industry have pervaded all areas of American life—family, education, politics, religion, art. Dalí certainly recognized that the public was mesmerized by illusion and pursuit of

distraction. In January 1937, *Harper's Bazaar* published an article by Dalí called "Surrealism in Hollywood":

> Reduced to idiocy by the material progress of a mechanical civilization, the public and masses demand urgently the illogical and tumultuous images of their own desires and their own dreams. It is for this reason that today these crowds press hungrily around surrealism's rescue table, digging their nails into the living flesh of morsels of dream which we offer them that we may 'save their fantasy' and proclaim 'the rights of man's madness.' Thus do we try to keep them from sinking forever into that thick leaden sea which is the everyday vulgarity and stupidity of the so-called 'realist' world.[75]

We get a sense of Dalí's loss of faith in surrealism's creative potential as the paranoid edge of his earlier texts gave way to the straight-forward disillusionment expressed here. Or could it be that his paranoid thinking was beginning to mesh with a society heading toward the twenty-first century—a time when illusion sometimes seems to be holding reality captive? By all accounts, Dalí's art was becoming part of a machine designed to generate celebrity, cultural currency and power. Madison Avenue, Hollywood, society life and the entertainment industry seduced Dalí and turned him into a symbol of the power available to those who provide the public with illusions so vivid, persuasive and real that they can live in them instead of "the everyday vulgarity and stupidity of the so-called 'realist' world."

In 1939 Bonwit Teller hired Dalí to design and construct two windows for their Fifth Avenue store. In keeping with his theme of the myth of Narcissus in both windows Dalí placed decidedly unattractive female wax

mannequins in environments that questioned the vanity on which merchants like Bonwit Teller rely. This massively self-indulgent display hints at the complexity of the artist reacting to Fifth Avenue window designers who, in his words, "all were trying more or less to ape Dalí."[76] He had accepted Bonwit Teller's offer with the understanding that he would be given free reign to "make a public demonstration of the difference between the true and the false Dalí manner." The events surrounding his experience with Bonwit Teller are frequently dismissed as a publicity stunt engineered by Dalí to enhance his reputation in America. However, Dalí's account of the project suggests something different:

> I detested modern manikins, those horrible creatures, so hard, so inedible, with their idiotically turned-up noses. This time I wanted flesh, artificial flesh, as anachronistic as possible. We went and unearthed in the attic of an old shop some frightful wax mannikins of the 1900 period with long natural dead women's hair. These manikins were marvelously covered with several years' dust and cobwebs....With great care we succeeded in transporting them almost in the state in which we had found them. I knew that their state was going to make a startling contrast with the frame of padded satin and mirrors that I had thought up.
>
> The theme of the display was intentionally banal. One of the displays symbolized Day, and the other, Night. In the "Day" display one of these manikins was stepping into a 'hairy bathtub' lined with astrakhan. It was filled with water up to the edge, and a pair of beautiful wax arms holding up a mirror evoked the Narcissus myth; natural narcissi grew directly out of the floor of the bedroom and out of the furniture. 'Night' was symbolized by a bed whose canopy was composed of the black and sleepy head of a buffalo carrying a bloody pigeon in its mouth; the feet of the bed were made of the four feet of the buffalo. The bedsheets of black satin were visibly burnt, and

> through the holes could be seen artificial live coals. The pillow on which the manikin rested her dreamy head was composed entirely of live coals. Beside the bed was seated the phantom of sleep, conceived in the metaphysical style of Chirico. It was bedecked in all the sparkling jewels of desire of which the sleeping wax woman was dreaming. This manifesto of elementary surrealist poetry right out in the street would inevitably arrest the anguished attention of passers-by with stupor when the morrow, amid so much surrealist decorativism, lifted the curtain on an authentic Dalinian vision.[77]

The night of the window installation, Dalí and Gala attended a performance at the Metropolitan Opera. On the way back to their hotel, they passed Bonwit Teller where workmen were in the process of setting up the display. As work progressed, Dalí saw opportunities for improvement. He and Gala worked through the night to make these last minute changes. The next morning, store management recognized the gap between the windows' message and their own interest. Without discussing it with Dalí, they removed the mannequins and demanded that he make other alterations. The details of what happened next vary. Most accounts report that Dalí was outraged, demanded his name be eliminated from the display, attempted to make changes and remove his name himself. In the midst of this dispute, he accidentally overturned the water-filled tub and broke the plate-glass window. What is memorialized on film is Dalí on Fifth Avenue—surrounded by a crowd of fascinated passers-by—being arrested by the NYPD after he jumped through the broken window.

This event characterizes Dalí's notoriety. As a result of the Bonwit

Teller incident and other controversial public appearances, Dalí's name became synonymous with outrageous behavior and surrealism itself. Many in the American art establishment and general public conceived of him as an eccentric foreigner bent on self-promotion and as the quintessential surrealist artist. No doubt his demonstrative behavior influenced the public's perception of him and the surrealist movement. Those who knew Dalí before he became a famous artist were not surprised by his exhibitionism. As Felix Fanés pointed out in his essay "The first image--Dalí and his critics: 1919 to 1929," even in his youth Dalí had an "innate capacity to arouse controversy" and a "cold and intelligent way of using that gift to draw attention to himself."[78]

In 1939, Dalí received a lucrative commission to design a surrealist pavilion for the New York World's Fair. Martica Swain's description of the event helps us put Dalí's contribution in context:

> One of the most improbably and inappropriately timed events of the decade...opened on a landfill the Flushing Meadows....Although many of the participating countries would be at war by the time its gates closed in the fall, no reminder of the looming threat of fascism clouded the confident displays of the wondrous life technological advance would bring, was indeed bringing....Moving belts conveyed astonished crowds around the inner circumference of the perisphere or through the General Motors building....Elsewhere one could ask questions of a robot who uttered monosyllabic answers, see the newest thing in farming, a cow hooked up to a milking machine, or glimpse a far-out vision of an automated workerless factory. The Italian building was a target of ridicule and was regarded as looking as vulgar as Il Duce himself, but too cardboard in appearance to be taken seriously. Topped by a sculpture of a

> regally enthroned woman, behind whom water cascaded down the terraced stories of the tall building, it was compared by some to a flushing toilet.[79]

The Dream of Venus [Fig. 56] combined the inspired, the mundane and the insipid in a spectacle that was by turns visually challenging and broadly entertaining. It certainly anticipated contemporary fabrications of super-size lavish works by prominent artists designed to appeal to a broad cross-section of people.[80] According to Swain:

> Over in the Amusement Park, along with the parachute jump, Billy Rose's Aquacade, and Frank Buck's 'Bring 'em back alive' wild animal show, was a pavilion whose modern plaster façade was inscribed 'Dream of Venus.' A giant head of a fish and a plaster leg obstructed the entrance; a fifteen-foot cutout of Botticelli's Venus was framed in a kidney-shaped opening above the door; through another door appeared another cutout, this one of Leonardo's coyly beckoning John the Baptist, while through a third opening there emerged a hybrid with a human body ending in a forked fishtail. The dream of Venus, born from the sea, was of her prenatal home: a room under water. To represent this room, the pavilion's impresario, Salvador Dalí, had devised a large aquarium, within which ten pretty young women were to swim or float, play a soft piano, or warm themselves at an underwater hearth.[81]

It is difficult to know how much of the pavilion represented Dalí's original design. Julien Levy originally conceived of the idea of the surrealist pavilion. He enlisted the British art collector and Dalí patron Edward James to invest in the project. The other backer was a manufacturer of molded rubber objects from Chicago, who was deeply disturbed by the finished product. Dalí considered the Chicago investor's interventions unwarranted and intolerable, and pulled out of the project prior to its opening. In spite of the

dissatisfactions of artist and investor, the public and press responded enthusiastically:

> Upon a 36-foot, red-satin bed called 'The Ardent Couch' an unclad Venus lies dreaming. Of her four uninhibited dreams, the first—an underwater vision called 'Venus's Pre-natal Chateau Beneath the Water'—is the real crowd-catcher. A long glass tank is filled with such subaqueous décor as a fireplace, typewriters with funguslike rubber keys, rubber telephones, a man made of rubber ping-pong bats, a mummified cow, a supine rubber woman painted to resemble the keyboard of a piano. Whatever this may mean as art, the exhibitors did not dilly-Dalí [sic] over it. Into the tank they plunged living girls, nude to the waist and wearing little Gay Nineties girdles and fish-net stockings. Swimming, grimacing, doing the Suzy Q, milking the cow, playing the 'piano', these Lady Godivers [sic], seen at close range and a trifle water-magnified, should win more converts to surrealism than a dozen high-brow exhibitions.[82]

In his surrealist paintings Dalí could blend the supremely ordinary and the startlingly horrific into a seamless whole. Here his shock effects seem like shallow afterthoughts, clumsily grafted on for the sole purpose of attracting the attention of the viewer. The separate pieces of this installation do not create a persuasive performance nor do they stand on their own as compelling works of art. Instead of giving us a window on an irrational world, they give us the spectacle of a gifted artist inexplicably masquerading as a hack. However, we cannot dismiss the fact that the realization differed greatly from the artist's conception. In fact, Dalí himself called *The Dream of Venus* "a frightful nightmare."[83] In the end, he believed the organizers only wanted his participation for its publicity value. We know that the corporate sponsors adapted Dalí's ideas to suit their commercial aims and disregarded

his letters of protest. Dalí published a manifesto—*Declaration of Independence of the Imagination and of the Rights of Man to His Own Madness* (New York 1939)—to separate himself from what he considered to be an adulterated presentation of his concept:

> I left for Europe, disgusted with *The Dream of Venus*, long before it was finished—so that I never did see my work completed. I was to learn subsequently that no sooner had I left than the corporation took advantage of my absence to fill *The Nightmare of Venus* with the anonymous tails of anonymous sirens, thus making what little was left of Dalí perfectly anonymous.[84]

Today, prominent artists guard against losing control over their projects. That is not to say that they shy away from outside support: Damien Hirst, for example, purportedly received a $1 million dollar advance to fabricate the works in his Fall 2000 solo show at Gagosian Gallery; and Jeff Koons' dealers and collectors financed the installation of his *Puppy* in Rockefeller Plaza and the manufacture of sculptures for his "Celebration" series. Expensive-to-produce art installations and the conflicting aims of artists and investors by their very nature continue to generate controversy.

x.

A statement made by Dalí in 1939, published in the catalogue for his one-man show at the Julien Levy Gallery in New York, reveals the priority he placed on the interrogation of vision and reiterates his estrangement from the dominant modernist tradition:

> Of a cubist picture one asks: "What does that represent?" -Of a surrealist picture, one sees what it represents but one asks: "What does that mean?"—Of a paranoiac picture one asks abundantly: "*What do I see?*" "What does that represent?" "What does that mean?" ...It means one thing certainly,—the end of so-called modern painting based on laziness, simplicity, and gay decorativism.[85]

In the place of modernist idealism's assumption that there can be universal agreement on what "objectively" has been seen, Dalí locates a way of seeing that animates skepticism. In the same essay, he attempts to legitimate his quest by naming his eminent progenitors. He admires the peculiar vision of Aristophanes, "that *sublime madman* of antiquity," who saw in cloud shapes the transformation of the nude body of a woman into a leopard or an enormous nose. He considers Leonardo da Vinci one of the "authentic innovators of paranoiac painting" because he recommended to his students that they regard "the indefinite shapes of the spots of dampness and the cracks on the wall...that they might see...out of the confused and the amorphous, the precise contours of the visceral tumult of an imaginary equestrian battle." Another painter Dalí admired was Piero di Cosimo, who observed "enigmatic and atavistic compositions" in the "viscous, mucous and bloody contours of tubercular spit."[86]

The incongruity between vision and language—between seeing and representation—presented in these prototypes, characterizes Dalí's paranoiac images. The foreground figures in the painting, *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus,* for example, call into question the possibility of an objective vision

of the world. The head of the partially submerged figure on the left is in a perpetual state of metamorphosis. Out of a single form, Dalí configures a series of viable objects including a nut, an egg and a bulb emerging one after another. This equivocation I have been describing variously is incorporated into the very structure of Dalí's surrealist paintings as a disruptive pulse, set in motion by the play between repulsion and attraction. The crossing of specific distinctions between the unconscious and the real, male and female, figure and ground, solid and formless, memory and act, painted and ready-made was a means Dalí used to cultivate confusion. His representations can be interpreted as a way to actively reject modernism's efforts to subjugate gaze to thought. However, in the end, Dalí's double-cross doubles back and encompasses him as much as those he seeks to transcend.

Although many of the emblematic forms of pictorial modernism display the rational energy of modernist logic in a way different from Dalí's pictorial strategy, he is, in fact, no less modern. The modernist icons such as Mondrian's grid paintings, the monochrome paintings of the color-field painters, and Frank Stella's systematic reinvention of the ground as figure bear little resemblance to Dalí's realism. However, what he represented always already has been there at the limit, albeit repressed by mainstream modernist logic. Dalí's paintings of his surrealist period—while quite different in structure, style and iconology from the work most often celebrated as monuments in the history of modern art—ultimately are merely

one more attempt to construct an imaginary space in which to work out impossible contradictions. His alternative to the optical logic of mainstream modernism, however, fails because it at once cancels and preserves its terms. In the end, Dalí's goal of otherness was self-defeating since we are still left with only the traces of the attempts, and the brilliance of process. In this sense he is a high modernist albeit one who stretched the modernist impulse to its ironic extremes, to the verge of a "concrete irrationality" that would de-authorize the modernist logic and its paradoxical critique of self-legitimation. I am anticipating, of course, the counter discourses of our postmodernisms.

[1] Dalí, "Photography, Pure Creation of the Mind," *L'Amic de les Arts* (Sitges) no. 18, 30 September 1927, 90-1. Reprinted in *Oui*, 13.

[2]Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions," 101. Ades cites Alain Bousquet's *Conversations with Dalí* (1969). "In late conversations Dalí scorned his own abilities, saying of his pictures that 'They don't count pictorially. They're badly painted...If you compare me with any classical painter whatsoever then I'm an absolute non-entity.' But his confession—for someone not given to modesty—that he would be incapable of 'doing even a mediocre copy of a canvas by Bouguereau or Meissonier"—was made in the full awareness that these nineteenth-century artists were the most reviled by twentieth-century artists; no-one else was even trying to emulate them, and moreover if Dalí described his pictures as badly painted, they were still in his estimation and by these unregarded standards incomparably better than anyone else's. The models against which he later measured himself were Vermeer, Velláquez, Raphael and Leonardo. This line of enquiry, in these terms, is a dead end; what mattered in the deployment of skill was its purposes and possibilities. For Dalí 'the pictorial means of expression are concentrated on the subject' [*The Conquest of the Irrational*]—not to be wondered at for their own sake."

[3]Dalí, *Conquest of the Irrational*, 113.

[4]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 161.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., 17.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Fèlix Fanés, "The first image—Dalí and his critics: 1919 to 1929," *Salvador Dalí: The Early Years*, Michael Raeburn, ed., (South Bank Centre: London, 1994), 92.

[9]Dalí, *The Secret Life,* 71. A preoccupation with the history of art by the Spanish avant-garde of the 1920s undoubtedly influenced Dalí's own perspective. Journals such as *L'Amic de les Arts* and gallery reviews consistently refer to the works of a wide range of canonical figures including Raphael, Poussin, El Greco, Ingres, Corot, Seurat, and Toulouse-Lautrec. In the column he wrote for the June 1926 issue of *L'Amic de les Arts*, Sebastià

Gasch described the subordination of nature to the demands of composition, of reality to invariable structural principals, of sensation to intelligence, of conception to perception. "...els autors de les quals no es preocuparen d'altra cosa més que d'organitzar llurs sensacions per mitjà de la de la intelligència....els autors de les quals no cercaren altra cosa més que fer passar la plàstica al davant de la reprentacío I no lingueren alra credo *que la preponderància de la concepció sobre la visió.*

[10]Ian Gibson, "Salvador Dalí: the Catalan Background," Catalogue for the exhibition: *Salvador Dalí: The Early Years*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 28 June to 18 September 1994 (London: South Bank Centre, 1994), 54

[11]Dalí—like Ozenfant, Jeanneret, Severini and deChirico and many other notable artists of his time—viewed painting and writing as parts of the same project.

[12]Galeries Dalmau, Barcelona, *Exposicio Salvador Dalí: Del 14 al 27 de Novembre de 1925*, back cover of catalogue.

[13]Montserrat Aguer and Fèlix Fanés, "Illustrated biography," in *Salvador Dalí: The Early Years*, 29.

[14]Ibid., 33. Letter from Pierre Loeb to Dalí, 7 December 1927. Collection of the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Figueres.

[15]Ades, *Dalí's Optical Illusions,* catalogue entry for *Aparatus and Hand,* 68.

[16]Evidence of the freedom Dalí felt to use material from diverse sources in his art can be found in the books in his personal library. In *Long's New Language Exercises,* Part 2, from the Eclectic Educational Series for Primary Schools by C. C. Long, Ph.D. (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, c1917, original printing c1889) there are many marginal sketches by Dalí influenced by the book illustrations. These illustrations in turn appear in altered forms in Dalí's paintings. Children with hoops on page 52, for example, resemble Dalí's little girls with hoops in paintings such as *Landscape with a Girl Skipping* (1936). Dalí's sketches frequently have a sexual tone, for example, the nude male he drew on the inside cover accentuated the genitalia; on page 3, Dalí appended to the illustration of a horse in profile an enormous penis pointing out toward the viewer.

[17]Salvador Dalí, "New Limits of Painting," originally published in *l'Amic de les Arts* no. 22 (February 29, 1928), 24 (April 30, 1928) and 25 (May 31, 1928). Republished in *Oui*, 36.

[18]Dalí, *L'Amic de les Arts* (Sitges) no. 26, 30 June 1928. Republished in *Oui*, 54.

[19]Gibson, 289-290.

[20]Lubar, *The Salvador Dalí Museum Collection*, 40-41.

[21]Yvonne Shafir, editor's notes in *Oui*, 159.

[22]Lubar, *The Salvador Dalí Museum Collection*, 41.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions," 18.

[25]Salvador Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, 128.

[26]Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions," 18.

[27]Ibid., 16-17.

[28]Hollier, "Surrealist Precipitates," *October* 69 (Summer 1994): 114.

[29]Ibid., 113.

[30]Ibid., 119.

[31]Eric M. Zafran, "'I am not a madman': Salvador Dalí in Hartford," *Dalí's Optical Illusions*, 52.

[32]Victor Burgin, *In/Different Spaces: Place and Memory in Visual Culture,"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 120. The chapter, "Paranoiac Spaces," was first published in *New Formations*, no. 12, (Winter 1990).

[33]Louis Pauwels with Salvador Dalí, *Dalí: The Passions According to Dalí*, trans. by Eleanor Morse (St. Petersburg, FL: The Salvador Dalí

Museum, 1985), 51.

[34]Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious,* 217.

[35]The fishhook piercing the creature recalls Chardin's similarly represented rayfish in numerous still lifes including *Cat with Ray, Oysters, Pitcher and Loaf of Bread* of c1928 now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection in Madrid. Of Chardin's *The Rayfish (1925-1926)* exhibited at the 1763 Paris Salon, Diderot wrote that it was an excellent example of "how to salvage objects of disgust through sheer talent." Marcel Proust claimed it demonstrated "how to transform a strange monster into the nave of a polychrome cathedral."

[36]For the woman's form Dalí looked for inspiration beyond modernism's preferred formal and stylistic sources. Here he relied on a démodé *fin-de-siècle* chromolithograph of a woman holding a lily to her face. Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism,* 59.

[37]Lubar, *Salvador Dalí Museum Collection,* 41.

[38]Ades, *Dalí and Surrealism,* 76-77.

[39]Gibson, *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí,* 110-111.

[40] Lubar, *Salvador Dalí Museum Collection,* 41.

[41]Gibson, "Salvador Dalí: The Catalan Background," 57. Gibson backed up his assertions with a statement made by Dalí to Pauwels in one of a series of interviews Pauwels recorded that identified "my mental landscape resembling the fantastic protean, rocks of Cape Creus."

[42]Ibid. In the same context, Pauwels noted that "on another occasion," as quoted by Joan Josep Tharrats, "he [Dalí] said he felt he was a human incarnation of this primitive landscape." [Joan Josep Tharrats, *Cent anys de pintura a Cadaqués,* Barcelona, Edicions del Cotal, 1981, 98.] Further, Gibson marks Cape Creus as the location of Dalí's first sexual encounters with Gala in 1929.

[43] Paul Éluard, *Lettres à Gala,* pp. 91-92. Cited in Gibson, *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí,* 297.

[44]Dalí, *The Tragic Myth,* 118.

[45]Ibid.

[46]This dedication is in Dalí's exemplaire de L'Immaculée Conception, Editions surréalistes (1930) in his personal library in Figueres. The text, written by Breton in collaboration with Eluard, attempts to simulate mental disorders and deny the existence of clear boundaries between the sane and the insane. According to Franklin Rosemont, the book's experiments were "reported sympathetically in *Annales Médico-Psychologiques* by several psychiatrists, including Jacques Lacan." Rosemont, 49.

[47]*The Persistence of Memory* was first shown at Pierre Colle in Paris June 3-15, 1931. The back cover of the catalogue featured this painting, listed as "*Coll. Part.*" [private collection]. The exhibition included over twenty paintings including *Le Jeu lugubre (Coll. Part.); Les Accommodations du désir (Coll. Part.); Portrait de Eluard (Coll. Part.).* From this time on, we see a shift in Dalí's immediate circle away from other artists and toward wealthy collectors and those who wanted to participate in his fame. The influence of Dalí's friends during his student years and the surrealist circle in the late 1920s and early 1930s nurtured his creativity. According to Breton Dalí's work became over-wrought. The back cover of the catalogue for the 1939 Dalí exhibition at the Julien Levy Gallery quotes Picasso: "Dalí eats up the miles. His imagination effects me like an outboard motor continually running."

[48]My description of the movement between modes of seeing generated by Dalí's images is drawn from Rosalind Krauss's theorization of a rhythm that conditions a variety of early twentieth-century works. This rhythm works against mainstream modernism ambition to ground the visual arts on vision's autonomy. Rosalind E. Krauss, "The Im/pulse to See," *Vision and Visuality*, 50-75.

[49]Jacques Lacan, "The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience," *Ecrits*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977) 1-7.

[50]Salvador Dalí, "Objets psycho-atmosphériques-anamorphiques," *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, no. 5 (May 1933), 45-48. This passage from Dalí's essay is cited by Rosalind Krauss in "Corpus Delicti," in *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986). In this essay, Krauss first establishes the relationship between Dalí's paranoiac-critical images and George Bataille's concept of the *informe*.

[51]Salvador Dalí, "L'Ane Pourri," *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 1, 9-12. Trans. by J. Bronowski in *This Quarter* 5, no. 1 (September 1932), 49-54 and republished by Lucy Lippard in *Surrealists on Art*, 97-100, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970).

[52]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 265-66.

[53]Descharnes and Néret, 207.

[54] Ades, "Dalí's Optical Illusions, 25. Ades cites Dylan Evans, *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* (London and New York, 1996) and Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection* (London, 1977).

[55]Dalí, *The Tragic Myth,* 55-6.

[56]Ibid., 3.

[57]Ibid., 37.

[58]Ibid.

[59] For a complete listing of the paintings believed to relate to the *Angélus* theme see Lubar, *Salvador Dalí Museum*, p. 88, note 1.

[60] Dalí, *The Tragic Myth,* 135.

[61] Lubar, *Salvador Dalí Museum*, 87-88.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Dalí had been crossing the line between the sacred and the profane since 1929 when he included the Eucharistic host and chalice in *Le Jeu lugubre* and used the outline of the Catholic icon "the Sacred Heart of Jesus" as the background for the slanderous words "Sometimes I spit on the portrait of my mother for the fun of it," which caused a long-term rupture between him and his father.

[64]Krauss, "The Im/pulse to See," 51.

[65]Krauss, "Pulse," *Formless: A User's Guide*, 161.

[66]Krauss, 163.

[67]Krauss, 164.

[68]Krauss, 134.

[69]Krauss, 135.

[70]Krauss, 109-110, 154-156.

[71]Marc J. LaFountain, *Dalí and Postmodernism: This is Not an Essence* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), xvi.

[72] Lubar, *Salvador Dalí Museum*, xii.

[73] Ibid., 118.

[74]Gibson, *The Shameful Life*, 422.

[75]Salvador Dalí, "Surrealism in Hollywood," *Harper's Bazaar* (June 1937), 68. As cited in Lubar, *Salvador Dalí Museum,* xii.

[76]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 371.

[77]Ibid., 372.

[78]Fanés, *The Early Years,* 95.

[79]Martica Swain, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995), 76.

[80]Around 1936, Dalí drafted a letter to Jaume Miravitlles, Propaganda Commissioner of the Generalitat of Catlonia. The letter indicates Dalí's interest in participating in "something sensationally revolutionary and unheard of in the history of culture." Dalí wrote: "Dear Miravitlles: I hope your lack of time does not make you underestimate the historical value of this letter. In Barcelona I expect to occupy the position of *"General Commissioner for Public Imagination"* so that once I have recuperated from my mental fatigue (due to the enormous effort of my last exhibition and finalising [sic] three new books) I will come to Barcelona to set this up—if possible reserve me the large Gaudi building in Paseo de Cracia [Casa Milà]. It is to do something *sensationally* revolutionary, and unheard of in the

history of culture." Draft of letter in the Dalí archives in Figueres.

[81]Swain, 76.

[82]Gibson, 447. Citing "World's Fairs. Pay As You Enter," *Time Magazine*, Chicago, 18 July 1939.

[83]Dalí, *The Secret Life*, 376.

[84]Ibid., 377.

[85]Salvador Dalí, "Dalí, Dalí!," statement in *Salvador Dalí*, exhibition catalogue, Julien Levy Gallery, New York, 1939.

[86]Ibid.

Chapter Four

Conclusion:
From the Optical Unconscious to the (Self)Conscious Optic

i.

Dalí engendered controversy in New York where, in the late 1930s, he sought refuge from the war in Europe. His detractors included the influential American art critic Clement Greenberg, who in his essay, "Avant Garde and Kitsch" (1938), called Dalí's paintings "too literary and antiquarian." Almost twenty-five years later, in *Dada and Surrealist Art* (1968), William Rubin, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art, also objected to the artist's representational strategies. Dalí's "visual tricks," wrote Rubin, served to "delimit rather than to enrich the pictorial experience."[1]

During a round table discussion in 1948 sponsored by the magazine, *Life,* at New York's Museum of Modern Art, the panel (which included Greenberg) declared Yves Tanguy's *Slowly Toward the North* [Fig. 57] far superior in every way to Dalí's *Spain* of 1938 [Fig. 58].[2] "The main reason for this distinction, as explained by Messrs. [James J.] Sweeney and [Alfred] Frankfurter, is that the dream symbols painted by Tanguy are original and obviously the product of his own experience, whereas those painted by Dalí

are hackneyed and look like they came from a book of Renaissance drawings." Sweeney also criticized *Spain* for its "machine finish," and asserted that its shortcomings arose from compromises Dalí made with popular taste. Sir Leigh Ashton, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London called the painting "...a smart-aleck piece of nonsense from a paint point of view—one of the most disgusting surfaces I've ever seen."

The roots of the panel's attitude may be traced to Greenberg's essay of a decade earlier. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" claimed that modernism originated in large part as a response to sociopolitical developments and depended on the purification and the self-referentiality of artistic means and ends. The modernist project, according to Greenberg, entailed the progressive elimination of the influence of one medium upon another, each being gradually reduced to its essential properties and possibilities. The avant-garde artist or writer should wish to retire from the public altogether in order to narrow and raise literature and art to the expression of an absolute—pure poetry and art for art's sake. It is the avant-garde's search for the absolute that led to the modernist call for abstract art. Content—subject matter or common experience—was to be dissolved completely into form so that the work of art or literature could not be reduced in whole or in part to anything not itself. The medium of the artist's or writer's craft became the focus and provided the inspiration.

Kitsch—from the German verb verbitschen [to make cheap]—is a by-product of the industrial age's astonishing capacity for mass production and its creation of disposable income. To Greenberg, kitsch referred to those things generally regarded as popular culture: jazz, Hollywood movies, commercial illustrations. Its raw material—mechanically-produced and formulaic—is the debased simulacra of genuine culture. Kitsch borrows from the forms of the fully matured cultural traditions and is the source of enormous profits attributed to the insensibility of its consumer to the values of genuine culture. It was the new commodity devised for the new market—for those hungry for some kind of diversion that only culture could provide. The interplay of avant-garde and kitsch is at the heart of the formative theoretical moment in the history of modernism.

In his essay, Greenberg dismissed Dalí's role in the development of modern painting. "The chief concern of a painter like Dalí," he wrote, "is to represent the processes and concepts of his consciousness, not the processes of his medium."[3] Greenberg rightly charged that Dalí included "outside" subject matter in his paintings rather than conveying meaning solely through the formal arrangement of shapes, colors and spaces on the canvas. Greenberg called for an absolute gulf between the artist's/viewer's emotions and life experiences and the painting's content. Clearly, Dalí was out of step with Greenberg's version of modernism. In his paintings, Dalí represented vision as inseparable from desire, which by its very nature

depends on the viewer's memories and experiences. To accomplish this, he freely mixed images from high art and popular culture. His paintings blur the fixed boundaries on which modernist autonomy purportedly depended and paved the way for certain postmodern art practices. Greenberg's limited view of modern painting, which he saw as the triumph of pure visuality, marginalized the production of many significant artists.[4] This led artwriters in the 1970s and 80s to dispute the efficacy of his construction of modernism.[5]

No less interested in commodity culture, the German philosopher Theodore Adorno also considered the opposition between kitsch and high art. As he wrote in *Aesthetic Theory*:

> It is useless to try and draw a fine line here between what constitutes true aesthetic fiction and what is merely sentimental rubbish (kitsch). Kitsch is like a poisonous substance that is mixed in with art. Discharging that poison is one of the most difficult tasks art faces at the present time."[6]

By maintaining the dialectical opposition between kitsch and high culture, Adorno's text sustains Greenberg's marginalization of Dalí's practice.

Not all intellectuals in the 1930s found this terminology productive. In his chapter, "Kitsch," in the catalogue for the exhibition, *Formless: A User's Guide*, Bois describes Bataille's failure to address kitsch in his writings:

> This lack of interest on Bataille's part in the idea of kitsch undoubtedly arose from the position of mastery (irony) and the clear taxonomy that it presupposes and against which it plays. The statue raised to the Cadum baby can only be appreciated ironically: it makes fun of the decorousness of taste and denies that there is an ontological split between the monument

> (eternal) and advertising (ephemeral); but one can only take ironic pleasure in it if one is confident in the solidity of one's own taste. One enjoys kitsch only from a distance (nothing is kitsch in itself: for an object to be perceived as kitsch, a distanced, mediated gaze must be directed toward it). In short, kitsch is dialectical: one only has access to it by knowing to the very tips of one's fingers what it attacks, to wit, modernism.[7]

In his book of essays on visual culture, *Mythologies,* Roland Barthes argued against the dialectical opposition between mass culture and high art imagery because the same process of mythical conversion takes place in both.[8] He warned that social phenomena as diverse as a wrestling match and a plastics exhibition can serve as a support for "mythical" or "depoliticized" speech—his terms for the systematic distortion that naturalizes what is cultural and historical. All of the apparently spontaneous forms and rituals of contemporary Western societies, claimed Barthes, are liable at any moment to be dehistoricized and naturalized, making cultural norms seem like facts of nature by endowing them with mythical meaning. He admonished his reader to take a critical approach even to seemingly light visual imagery. By giving a natural justification to an historical intention, myth masks the social and economic conditions that separate people, and serves, at least temporarily, to resolve the contradictions that confront modern society.

Barthes intended to explain the production of meaning in systems of discourse outside of language using a method rooted in linguistics. Today *Mythologies* is recognized for having opened up new interpretative possibilities

for artists, art critics, and contemporary cultural studies. Indeed, Barthes anticipated modes of image production in postmodern culture. Artists now accept the mobile action of signifiers and attempt neither to disguise nor naturalize the artificial qualities and conditions of representation. As Barthes explained in his conclusion, mythological or ideological meaning is produced by the inversion of a cultural, historical sign (the third term of what he calls the first-order linguistic semiological system) into the natural, universal signifier of myth (a second-order semiological system or metalanguage). Myth takes hold of the meaning of the linguistic system, and impoverishes it by draining history from it. This penury allows a new signification—one which absorbs the history, a history that is "less reality, than a certain knowledge of reality"—to replenish the signifier of myth. The movement from the linguistic sign to the mythical signifier is described by Barthes as "an abnormal regression from meaning to form." This mystification—a "constant game of hide-and-seek between the meaning and the form"—allows conflicts to be held in suspension and contingencies to be made to appear eternal. Moreover, he argued, the mythical inversion naturalizes class, making the power of the dominant classes appear to be legitimate.[9]

One of the images taken by Barthes from French everyday life to illustrate the production of meaning through a process of mystification is a photograph of a black soldier saluting the French flag. The obvious meaning of the picture—featured on the cover of *Paris-Match*—is that France is a great Empire faithfully served by all of its citizens, whatever their color. In

addition to this meaning, there is a greater semiological system to be considered: the black man's zeal with regard to the flag of his so-called oppressors emphatically responds to those who might protest French colonialism during the 1950s.

As Barthes explained, he was reading the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* at the time he wrote these essays and became convinced:

> That by treating 'collective representations' as sign-systems, one might hope to go further than the pious show of unmasking them and account in detail for the mystification which transforms petit-bourgeois culture into a universal nature.[10]

Barthes also explained the double theoretical framework on which he based these essays:

> On the one hand, an ideological critique bearing on the language of so-called mass culture; on the other, a first attempt to analyze semiologically the mechanics of this language.[11]

Mythologies demonstrated that all social signs—those taken from high art and kitsch—are entangled with other signs in systems productive of value, power and prestige. In his essay, "Change the Object Itself: Mythology Today," first published in April 1971, Barthes questioned his earlier findings:

> Has anything changed? Not French society, at any rate not at this level, mythical history having a time-scale different to that of political history. Nor the myths, nor even the analysis: in our society the mythical still abounds, just as anonymous and slippery, fragmented and garrulous, available both for ideological criticism and semiological dismantling. No, what has changed these fifteen years is the *science of reading* under whose gaze myth, like an animal long since captured and held in observation, does

nevertheless become *a different object.*[12]

In "Change the Object Itself" Barthes writes that what must be "distinguished and described" is no longer "sign, signifier, signified and connotation but citation, reference, stereotype."[13] In *The Return of the Real*, Foster relates Barthes theory to contemporary art praxis:

> As early as 1970 Barthes had revised his project of myth robbery and ideology critique. On the one hand it might presume too much: a position of truth outside myth, a place of subjectivity beyond ideology. On the other hand it might lead to a form of sophistication in which contempt substitutes for critique. One must do more, Barthes argued, shake the sign, challenge the symbolic. In some practices in the 1980s this mandate led to innovative work concerning the making of meaning and value, identity and privilege, in dominant artistic representations and cultural discourses. However, in other practices it took on a different valence: not a recoding of the mythical commodity-sign as much as a fascination with its splintered signifiers. In this work the passion *of* the commodity-sign, its vicissitudes under advanced capitalism, was met by a passion *for* the commodity-sign, a fetishism of 'the factitious, differential, encoded, systematized aspect of the object.' Sometimes this passion, this fetishism, made it difficult to distinguish, among postmodernist artists and post-structuralist critics alike, between *critics* of the reification and fragmentation of the sign and *connoisseurs* of this same process.[14]

New critical models in art and theory allow new light to be shed on Dalí's contribution to the history of modern art. In his introduction to the year 2000 edition of the catalogue for The Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, Lubar addressed Dalí's critical reception. The essay title, "The Martyrdom of Salvador Dalí," appropriately sets the tone for Lubar's central theme:

> The story of Dalí's "fall" from surrealist grace and his apotheosis as modernist art's alter ego—the anti-Christ of formalist painting—is a complex affair marked by accusations, recriminations, and, as many would argue, bad faith.[15]

Lubar reviewed Dalí's "sins" against the French and American art establishments. Until recently, the dominant cultural elite dismised Dalí as as much for his flamboyant behavior, apolitical stance, cultivation of the media and influential society friends, as for his deliberately retrograde technique. In 1960, John Canaday raised this question:

> [T]he extremity of the public personality [Dalí] has presented, that of a clamourously ambitious and unabashedly opportunistic man; the absurdity of his pronouncements about himself and his art; his appalling syntheses of mawkish religiosity, sentimental sexuality and abnormal psychology; his maddening way of skidding back and forth across the line that divides slickness from technical brilliance—all of this makes one ready to throw the baby out with the bath water.[16]

In 1970 the Knoedler Gallery presented a one-man show called "Dalí: Paintings and Drawings 1965-70." In his review of the paintings for The New York Times, Hilton Kramer claimed these works "add only a corrupted simulacrum of familiar gestures." Kramer continued:

> Their sole function is to perform a visual charade in which the public—a public terrified at experiencing any emotion it has never experienced before—will recognize its own most cherished yearnings.
>
> Art of this kind does not appeal to our curiosity but to our prejudices. Its mission is not to question or to complicate our emotions, but to confirm them. And such art can only succeed in its meretricious task if it effectively disguises its rehearsal of the familiar in the kind of technical display which, for minds of a certain disposition, is always a satisfactory substitute for real vision.[17]

As recently as 1997, Dalí's influence was not acknowledged in the exhibition, *The Warhol Look: Glamour Style Fashion* at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Organized by The Andy Warhol Museum to mark the tenth anniversary of Warhol's death, the exhibition brought together an eclectic mix of objects drawn from the domains of fashion, politics, high society and low culture. Indeed, visitors to the exhibition found an entire floor of the Whitney given over to what once would have been considered beyond the parameters of art by both the art establishment and the general public. *Interview* covers and articles, reconstructions of department store vitrines, series of publicity photographs of luminaries from the entertainment and political arenas confirmed Warhol's interest in images outside the traditional boundaries of high art. Thomas Sokolowski, director of The Andy Warhol Museum, identified "this eclectic mixing and matching" as the keystone of Warhol's artmaking strategy, which Sokolowski labeled "aesthetic shopping." As we have seen, decades before Warhol, Dalí similarly blurred the line between art, glamour, fame, notoriety and merchandising.

Although Dalí certainly anticipated Warhol's aesthetic exploration of the concept of glamour there was only one reference to Dalí at the Whitney. This mention—a photographic head-shot of Dalí on the cover of the May 1973 issue of *Interview*—served to represent Dalí as only one of hundreds of famous people who caught Warhol's eye.[18] I interpret this lapse as in keeping with the organizer's aim to situate Warhol as a descendent of

artworld "insiders" including Marcel Duchamp.[19]

Now, at the start of the twenty-first century, the influence of Dalí's work on contemporary art is being reconsidered. For example, on November 17, 2000, *Hypermental: Rampant Reality 1950-2000 From Salvador Dalí to Jeff Koons* opened at the Kunsthalle Zurich. This exhibition featured the work of a diverse group of artists including Dalí, Koons, and Glenn Brown, the Turner Prize-nominated British artist. Curator Bice Curiger acknowledged both Dalí and Duchamp as key figures "in forming a bridge between the avant-garde in the early years of the century and its later manifestations."[20] Although the Dalí paintings in *Hypermental* date from the 1950s and 1960s—decades after his surrealist period—as Norman Bryson points out in his catalogue essay, "[T]he territory that was opened in the twenties and thirties remains with us today, as part of the 'unfinished' project of modernity."[21] In accord with certain aspects of Dalí's paranoiac-critical method, for the purposes of this exhibition, the word "hypermental" signified a space where the rational and irrational come together and reflect the central experiences of life. The essential difference between Dalí and today's artists as presented in *Hypermental* is that the postmodern artists subordinate individual psychology to a collective experience conditioned by the media. Moreover, according to Curiger, this "media-reality" has been transformed into "nature" and has collapsed the distance between art and commodity.

In an interview in Winter 2000, Koons confirmed that Dalí had an early and on-going influence on him.[22] Evidence of this is seen in Koons's one-man show, *Easyfun-Ethereal,* which opened in Fall 2000 at the Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin. The museum commissioned Koons to paint a series of seven billboard-sized (3 x 4.3 meters each) photo-realist canvases. According to Koons, there are numerous references to Dalí in these paintings. For example, the corn kernels that float across the surface of *Lips* (2000) [Fig. 59] suggest the corn cobs draped around the neck of Dalí's porcelain figure, *Retrospective Bust of a Woman* [Fig. 60] in New York's Museum of Modern Art. The moustache pressed against the surface of *Sandwiches* (2000) [Fig. 61] refers to both Dalí and Duchamp. Formally, the double reading of mouth/donut in *Bluepoles* (2000) [Fig. 62] reminds us of Dalí's paranoid imagery. Robert Rosenblum notes that Koon's title refers to Jackson Pollock's painting of 1952, *Blue Poles,* but, according to Rosenblum, the painting itself has more in common with surrealism:

> However often Pollock's turbulent ghosts haunt these immaterial spaces, Koon's art-historical pedigree usually evokes ancestors of the kind more obviously involved with dreams and body parts—the Surrealists. In discussing the commercial sources for these seven paintings, Koons would often refer to Magritte and Dalí as venerable prophets of his current enterprise. For instance, he mentioned enthusiastically Magritte's *The False Mirror* (1928), a painting of a cloudscape magically seen through a disembodied eye—an image recently conspicuous in New York in an ad for the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Making Choices.* Koon's affinity to Magritte is as predictable as his frequent invocation of Dalí, whose metamorphic anatomies and warped spatial infinities also provide a background for computer fantasies.[23]

The iconography of the singing figure dressed as a lobster in *Bluepoles* suggests the foreground figure with a lobster on his head in Dalí's painting, *Gala and The Angelus of Millet before the Imminent Arrival of the Conical Anamorphoses* (1933) [Fig. 48]; his surrealist object, *Lobster Telephone* (1936) [Fig. 63]; his cover design for *Minotaure* (1936) [Fig. 64]; and costumes for the "Dream of Venus" Pavilion (1939) [Fig. 65 and 66].

In addition to his references to other artists, Koons relies on images of alluring body parts, food, fashion, and popular entertainment scanned from computers by his assistants. The goal driving his choice of imagery suggests his fascination with the "splintered signifiers" of the commodity-sign as described by Foster in *The Return of the Real*. As Koons told David Sylvester in February 2000:

> One of the greatest pleasures I remember is looking at a cereal box. It's a kind of sexual experience at that age because of the milk. You've been weaned off your mother, and you're eating cereal with milk, and visually you can't get tired of the box....You know, all of life is like that or can be like that. It's just about being able to find amazement in things. I think it's easy for people to feel connected to that situation of not tiring of looking at something over and over again, and not feeling any sense of boredom, but feeling interest. Life is amazing, and visual experience is amazing.[24]

The style of Koons's bright-colored imagery, represented as flat on the painting surface, suggests print advertising, billboards and computer-generated designs. Rosenblum recalls his visit to Koons's "factory-sized" studio:

> My mission was to watch him at work, to see how he compiled his sources, recreated them in his imagination, and materialized them....*Easyfun-Ethereal*...opens fresh vistas on his trademark marriage of computerized precision and free-floating fantasy. Both of these components—state-of-the-art technology and a populist dreamworld of the senses—are conspicuous muses in Koons's working spaces. Entering his studio is like entering a business office. Computers, Xeroxes, files, and a busy staff replace paint tubes, brushes, stretchers. We seem to have exchanged the artist's ivory tower for the assembly line, laboratory world of the commercial designer who invents the visual delirium that surrounds us, those explosive and ephemeral riots of gaudy artifice we usually screen from our eyes.[25]

The polished perfection of Koons' surfaces may be the apotheosis of what in 1948 Sweeney labeled Dalí's "machine finish." Banal, feel-good imagery including milk, cookies, pancakes and syrup freely mix and mingle with sexualized body parts. Rosenblum describes Koon's selection process for imagery which half-a-century earlier would have certainly been condemned as kitsch:

> Koons revels in such commonplace facts as the extravagant ways in which dry cereal is packaged to make kids grab it off the supermarket shelf....If he sees a full-page ad designed to plunge us into a whirlpool of pleasures set in motion by the addition of almonds to chocolate...he pores over it, and then cuts it out for future reference. If, thumbing through more high-priced ads, he notices the way Cacharel's lingerie promotion undresses a ravishing French model, setting aloft her tricolor bra and panties in computerized winds, he puts that in yet another stockpile....The pages that captivate him are those that rush us from one enchantment to another, from the pleasures of childhood food, fun, and games (stuffed animals, water slides, Pokémon characters, sandwiches, sporting happy faces made of sliced-olive eyes and mustard smiles, a Thanksgiving turkey made of ice cream) to the pleasures of grown-up lust (wafting visions of lipsticked mouths, silk-smooth legs, perfumed hair, nail-polished toes).[26]

While the paintings of both Dalí and Koons rely on the use of so-called kitsch imagery, there is an enormous gap between their aesthetic aims. Koons's art plays on the collapse of the dialectic between the avant-garde and kitsch. In fact, he positions his banal references to commodity culture as a kind of salvation for the masses:

> I try to not let art be a discriminator. People feel so much guilt and shame about their cultural past. And so I use the theme of banality to try to give people back their own cultural history. They should not be segregated from their life experiences.[27]

According to Foster, Koons finds the "fetishistic aspect of the commodity-sign" compelling. "In effect," writes Foster, "Koons performed what [Walter] Benjamin predicted long ago: the cultural need to compensate the lost aura of art with 'the phony spell' of the commodity and the star."[28] Koons recounted to me his childhood memory of a book of Dalí reproductions that was a fixture on his parents coffee-table. In the early 1970s, he telephoned Dalí, who invited Koons to meet with him at The St. Regis Hotel in New York. From the hotel they went together to Dalí's one-man show at the Knoedler Gallery. Koons remains impressed with Dalí's commercial success (sales of books on Dalí are topped only by those on Picasso, Koons told me). In his analysis of Koons's commodity sculptures of the 1980s, Foster claimed that the artist's market value rose along with the value of his art objects and we "covet and consume not the work per se so much as the Koons."[29] If failure to recognize Dalí's contribution to the history of modern art is rooted in Greenberg's dialectical opposition of high art and commodity

culture, then Koons's acceptance by the art establishment suggests it is indeed time for reconsideration of Dalí. The starting point for this discussion is his paranoiac-critical activity as an organizing and productive force of objective chance. "Dalí's researches into perception and optical illusions are surrounded by an atmosphere of fevered fluidity," wrote Curiger, who uses the word "universality" to describe him. "Not as in Renaissance Man...but a 20th and 21st century universality for the seeing person and the paranoiac alike, whose intelligence finds itself at an interface of many different forces, aware that it can never rationally penetrate the whole or the totality of anything."[30]

Other contemporary artists whose work explores territory mapped by Dalí include Damien Hirst, Glenn Brown, Richard Billingham and Andreas Gursky. Hirst's installations, designed to represent death and decay, certainly have roots in Dalí's surrealist art. The *Hypermental* exhibition included a black-and-white photograph from 1991, *With Dead Head*. For this photograph taken in a morgue, Hirst placed his own head on a table beside the upright severed head of a corpse. Hirst claims that his installation, *Some Comfort Gained from the Acceptance of the Inherent Lies in Everything* (1996)—a cow chainsawed horizontally into twelve sections and spaced so that viewer's can walk between them—suggests "the processes of life and death: the ironies, falsehoods and desires that we mobilise to negotiate our alienation and mortality."[31] The flayed cow's head with live maggots that

hatch into flies zapped by an insect-o-cutor presented in Hirst's steel and glass vitrine, *A Thousand Years* (1991) [Fig. 67], are descendants of Dalí's rotting donkeys and flies.

The painter, Glenn Brown appropriated Dalí's *Self-Construction with Boiled Beans* [Fig. 68] to produce his oil-on-canvas painting, *Dalí-Christ* (1992) [Fig. 69], which is close in form, content and color to its source. Dalí painted *Self-Construction with Boiled Beans* in 1936 when he and Gala sought refuge in Rome from the Spanish Civil War. A fierce painting, it depicts the self-destruction implicit in being torn between the dream of home and the distress of displacement. It conveys the rootlessness that gives refugees an insuperable feeling of fragmentation and loss. *Self-Construction with Boiled Beans* ranks with Goya's etchings of war and Picasso's *Guernica* as expressions of anguish. Dalí's gigantic self-tortured creature is surrounded by a rich Mediteranean blue sky. In *Dalí-Christ*, Brown subtly changed the color to approximate the impoverished and incessant light of a hospital emergency room or computer screen. Brown also altered the dimensions making *Dalí-Christ* more than twice as large but proportionally narrower than its model. The central form—monstrous yet majestic in Dalí's work—in Brown's cramped version is softer and markedly less strained. Moreover, Brown diminished the power of certain forms like the human tongue draped over the creature's thigh

by emphasizing the fact that it is a painted representation.

Painters work in the oldest of art's traditions. For most of the twentieth century, if a painting could be linked to certain traditions, the artist was considered academic or commercial. The painter's recourse was to somehow nudge the tradition or to put it in quotation marks. Brown's work may be read as the latter: an ironic acknowledgment that there is nothing "original" left for painters to represent. The old academy appreciated artists who gave them polished representations of Western European myth, religion and history. In *Dali-Christ*, Brown takes a painting with its own mythology and re-presents it according to the rules of a new academy.

Brown's art raises questions concerning the idea of engendering (modernism's anxiety with originality, with the unique, with beginnings) and the idea of the generic. By generic I mean the reflective, the reflexive, the spectral, the second sight. Modernism's trajectory from the primal visionary to the belated gaze—from the immediate to the mediated—assails mainstream modernism and its anxieties of primacy. In an interview in 1996, Brown discussed the evolution of his artmaking strategy:

> I was painting from photographs of modernist buildings. Then I started doing paintings of the moon's surface because I wanted to make a flat-onto-the surface figurative painting that reflected the fact that it was paint on canvas, so I could make a figurative painting without perspective.[32]

Brown's statement suggests that the modernist preoccupation with the

Greenbergian notion of pure painting continues to condition our own historic moment. In the same interview, Brown addressed his struggle with originality:

> After a great deal of angst I still couldn't justify why I was painting. I guess I thought that I wasn't doing anything more than Gerhard Richter had done already. I knew I wanted to paint, and the laborious process of reproducing a photograph seemed wonderfully pointless.

Finally, Brown considered the impossible goals of modernist idealism:

> Even then all the paintings had this shear flat surface. The paintings of the moon, modernist architecture, observatories and satellites were about a search for utopia, and its inevitable failure.

Brown's decision to piggy-back on Dalí—an outsider to mainstream modernism's canon—is interesting for its echo of Dalí's own strategy: to embrace the outmoded and retrograde. Indeed the concept of kitsch reinforces the connection between Brown and Dalí. Brown's painting, *The Loves of Shepherds*, short-listed for the 2001 Turner Prize, stirred controversy when it was revealed that it was a scaled-up copy of the cover of a science-fiction book. The cover artist— allegedly angered by the difference in market value between his work and Brown's—is considering legal action.[33] Given the pervasiveness of manipulated imagery in all sectors of our society, this kind of debate will continue. In light of the significant role his Turner Prize-nominated work plays in this controversy, Brown's repudiation suggests a remarkable indifference to the real issues at stake here: "I have radically altered Roberts's work in terms of scale and color"

and "the title and color refer to a painting by Fragonard."[34]

A more direct claim on the right to make art from the images of others conditions the work of Matthew Buckingham, a documentary film-maker. At the *Greater New York Artists 2000* exhibition at PS1, Buckingham's work featured films found on a New York City sidewalk. Titled "Situation Leading to a Story, 1999," the installation consists of two spaces. In the first, a 16mm film projector rests on the floor of a small gallery behind a hole in one wall. A version of the found film is projected through the hole into the second space where it appears on the wall below eye level. One segment, filmed in Peru sometime during the 1920s, features Peruvian laborers building a tramway necessary for the operation of an American mining corporation. The artist's voice narrates the details of finding the film (in a trash pile on a downtown curb) and researching the origin of the home movies, which belonged to an affluent family seen in one segment playing croquet on their Westchester estate. Buckingham described his project in surrealist terms:

> The installation evokes and questions the privilege of anonymity in looking at someone else's home movies, a privilege bordering on the uncanny—literally bringing to light something which was intended to remain private and hidden. Examining these dislocated images, which point to their lost authenticity as they become documents of their own power relations, *Situation Leading to a Story* forms an implicit critique of ways that images from the past are often deployed as fantasies of history.[35]

Like Dalí, Buckingham borrows from history and pushes the conventional

limits of his medium. The interplay of fact and fiction—reality and invention—in both artists' projects remains intricate and uncertain. In *Situation Leading to a Story* we find what Dalí, in another context, described as the "presence of the active and systematic elements," which "ensures the evolutionary and productive character peculiar to paranoiac-critical activity."[36] As we looked at in Chapter Two, according to Dalí:

> The presence of active and systematic elements does not imply the idea of voluntarily directed thinking, nor of any intellectual compromise, for, as we know, in paranoia the active and systematic structure is consubstantial with the delirious phenomenon itself—every delirious phenomenon of a paranoiac nature, even if instantaneous and unexpected, already comprises the systematic structure 'in full' and only objectivizes itself *a posteriori* by critical intervention.[37]

In her discussion of Dalí's relevance to contemporary art, Curiger distinguished Dalí's paranoiac-critical method from other surrealist methods:

> The Surrealists stressed the existence of a psychic reality as opposed to a rational concept of what is real that had become impossibly narrow. While André Breton insisted in his first Surrealist manifesto that creative work should be free of any kind of rational control or aesthetic or moral constraints. Salvador Dalí's paranoiac-critical method is closer to art praxis today in that it makes provision for an observing agent that takes action and passes on and works through the impulses it receives. 'Like Lacan, Dalí took a holistic approach, according to which the irrational already exists as a latent, space-time *totum* and is merely activated by our capacity for paranoia.'[38]

Moreover, Curiger connects today's hyperrealistic style to Dalí's paranoiac-critical method:

> In the super-charged arena of art and consciousness it has become clear that our media-oriented society is continually producing hyperrealities—for all the world as though Dalí's

> 'paranoiac-critical method' had long since become a ubiquitous, collective hallucination ritual.[39]

In the mid-1980s, the German photographer Andreas Gursky began to mine the territory between the instantaneous and unexpected and systematic structures revealed by critical intervention. The subject of his photographs is often a real event, which he then uses as a pretext for his analytical cultural view. According to Gursky:

> A visual structure appears to dominate the real events shown in my pictures. I subjugate the real situation to my artistic concept of the picture...On a formal level, countless interrelated micro and macrostructures are woven together, determined by an overall organizational principle.[40]

To achieve his representational goals, Gursky first had to abandon the tripod-bound view camera favored by Hiller and Bernd Becher, whose rigorous methods and objective style influenced Gursky's early work. He replaced the stationery instrument with a hand-held Leica that produced unusually large negatives. This equipment change gave him both greater freedom in image selection and the ability to capture an extraordinary amount of detail. Peter Galassi's description of Gursky's *Klausenpass* [Fig. 70] provides an example of how his switch to the hand-held camera affected his art practice. When Gursky first enlarged the negative of his view of *Klausenpass*:

> ...he was excited to find scattered across the landscape the tiny figures of hikers whose presence the photographer, unlike his camera, had failed to register at the time. He thus rediscovered one of the oldest, simplest, and most rewarding pleasures of photography—the patient delectation of details too small, too incidental, or too overwhelming in their inexhaustible specificity to have been noticed, let alone pondered, at the moment of

exposure.[41]

In his discussion of Gursky's photograph, *Tokyo Stock Exchange* [Fig. 71], Galassi distanced Gursky from straight photography:

> Gursky's originality lies in the vividness with which he has distilled compelling images from the plenitude of this commercialized image-world....The subject of *Tokyo Stock Exchange* is not the trading floor glimpsed at a given moment through the eyes of a unique observer, but the identity of the whole operation, including all its unseen machinations—not so much a particular place in Tokyo as the stock market in general, as a global institution, or, further, as not merely an economic institution but a model of contemporary behavior. The traders, uniformed in black and white, lose their identities in the mass, which nonetheless provides the raison d'être for the particular task that each so intently pursues...[29-30]

There is an absence of boundaries and defining borders in Gursky's photographs that has led critics to discuss his work in terms of the Romantic sublime. Cooke complicates the theory of a Gurskian sublime:

> [Gursky] at once evokes the Sublime and in the same move precludes its proper operation. The key to this is the way that his photographs can never be read as transparent, as unproblematically illusionistic representations of a world beyond. Prising the photograph apart from the phenomenal world to which it is bound indexically, is a filter, an interface that necessarily distorts as its order, an insistent veil that counters the effects of immediacy and immersion. This veil is constituted from tropes and modalities integral to modernist painting, not those that pertain to or derive from photography per se.[42]

Cooke concludes:

> Subordinating the clarity of the dispassionate gaze to the destabilizing workings of figural desire, to adopt J. –F. Lyotard's terminology, these haunting works avoid closure and seek formlessness as a possible index to the unrepresentable. In this they offer new paradigms for unbounded space while, paradoxically, the very bleakness of their hallucinogenic

> hyperreality betrays a vestige of melancholy for the lost illusions of modernism.[43]

As the *Hypermental* exhibition established, Dalí is a catalyst for discussion of the changes in art practices between the first and second halves of the twentieth-century. According to Curiger, "Dalí used his 'painterly eye' as his own personal state-of-the-art camera," which combined with his love of detail to produce a kind of "hyperrealism *avant la letter.*"[44] In her essay, "The Phantom of Sex Appeal," Krauss claims that:

> The Surrealist photographers invented ways of seeing that cast an aura over the objects of their vision, that seemed to make the viewers' own desires resonate within the objects....Often, it was enough to do nothing more than recontextualize an object about which everything was otherwise "normal." Objects thus invested seemed both real and "virtual," both outside the viewing subject and a function of that subject's imagination. It is precisely this sense of an image world fusing with a real world that characterizes our present image-infested culture, whether we call that a culture of spectacle or of simulation.[45]

In this essay, Krauss singles out Dalí's photographic practice as "the most emblematically Surrealist of them all," even though the artist did not actually take the photographs himself. To make the photograph, *The Phantom of Sex Appeal* [Fig. 72], "Dalí acted as art director and set dresser, producing the image by manipulating his own models and directing his own cameraman." Krauss claims that this mixture of passivity and activity intensifies the connection between subject and object:

> ...Dalí's abstinence from actually using the camera is like Giacometti's in never taking up the chisel; the passivity of both in relation to the technical production of the image was a way

of allowing its grip over them to be all the more total.[46]

Gursky's photographs of real events such as the *Tokyo Stock Exchange* or *Union Rave* [Fig. 73] also suggest an intense bond between subject and object, motivated in these works by the tremendous amount of information conveyed by content and structure. As Galassi writes about *Union Rave*:

> Gursky's subject matter is not only the portrayal of a real event. He is much more concerned with the structure produced by this surging mass of people. And the artist orchestrates the scene to such an extent that nothing is left to chance. In this way he subordinates the situation as he finds it to his own artistic concept.[47]

In earlier works, such as *Klausenpass*, during the normal course of developing the negative, Gursky became fascinated with the universe of information contained in details revealed by the camera lens. In 1992, he began using digital technology to intensify detail and control the contingencies of perspective so his pictures "offer a continuous reward from very far to reasonably near, as the macrocosm reveals its microcosmic structure."[48] Digital manipulation of the image allowed him to produce overwhelmingly dense images with an astonishing sharpness of detail.

We see in *Tokyo Stock Exchange* and *Union Rave* an intensification of the sense of unease conveyed by Dalí's surrealist oeuvre. These photographs, which have no identifiable center, leave the viewer bewildered by the immense amount of information contained in countless micro and macrostructures spread across the picture's surface. As Galassi points out, Gursky's "principal interest is not the object he happens to be photographing,

but rather the act of transforming his specifically visual experience into an image." Gursky generates meaning, writes Galassi, "through the tension between *creating an image* and *its effect on the viewer.*"[49] In this way, the awareness of "reality as representation" crystallized by Dalí finds contemporary expression in the photographic practice of Gursky.

ii.

Dalí had faith; faith in history, tradition, art and, above all, in his own contribution to the history, tradition and the future of art. Paradoxically, this is indeed what attracted him to paranoia. Of all the neuroses and psychoses, paranoia is the most rational: it demands logic, knowledge and control over one's environment. The production of paranoiac delusions depends on an acute awareness of the world outside the self, and on the producer's ability to limit and distort—to use today's terminology, "manipulate"—what is included in their construction. During his surrealist period, what set Dalí apart from the paranoiac was his willingness to leave the past behind. Whereas the paranoiac seeks constant affirmation of the stability of his/her identity, one of Dalí's surrealist aims was to reject the very notion of a stable identity. This began to change in the late 1930s. At the end of the Spanish Civil War, when Franco came to power, Dalí supported the dictator's regime. Letters to Buñuel make clear Dalí's allegiances and the reasons for them:

> The Reds imprisoned my sister in Barcelona for twenty days! They tortured her, she went mad, she's in Cadaqués, they have to force-feed her, she shits in her bed, imagine the tragedy of my father from whom they stole everything, he has to live in a boarding house in Figueres, naturally I'm sending him dollars, he's turned into a fanatical worshipper of Franco, he considers him a demi-god, the 'glorious Caudillo' as he calls him in each of his delirious letters (they managed to keep all my things in the house in Cadaqués safe). The revolutionary effort was such a disaster that everyone prefers Franco. On this subject I'm receiving tremendous information. Life-long Catalanists, federal Republicans, bitter anti-clericals—they're all writing to me enthusiastically about the new regime.[50]

Buñuel's response requested financial assistance from Dalí. Dalí's reply, which flatly refused to aid Buñuel, reveals Dalí's preoccupation, at this time, with money, fame, and most importantly, origins—familial, national and psychological. There is also a stated need for control that suggests paranoid thinking may have begun to condition his life as well as his art. It is interesting to note that the apparent shift in Dalí's representational goals—from paintings that insist on indeterminancy and impermanence to an emphasis on the value of order, hierarchy and convention—occurred at this time.

> I can't send you anything at all, and it's a decision taken after great hesitations and much reflection, which I'm now going to explain to you. This is the reason for my delay in answering you, since normally I hate making people wait for replies having to do with money—
>
> Here is the outline of my attitude (tremendously abbreviated, but I know that you appreciate my sincerity in such matters).
>
> For three years now I've been occupying myself passionately with all matters relating to *objective chance*....All of this was inevitable given my almost inhuman sentiments of *'FRENETIC*

> *egoism,'* that is to say the need to *control*, as long as I live, and with the maximum *intensity*, every situation (Freud's pleasure principle).
>
> All the predictions and experiences I've had recently counsel me not to lend you money....My present situation is as follows: the overcoming of my William Tell complex, that is to say, the end of hostilities with my father, the reconstruction of the ideal of The Family, sublimated in racial and biological factors, etc. etc. etc. As a result of this, I send everything I can to Cadaqués (everything I am able to do in this sense will contribute to my own triumphant self-construction)....
>
> To recapitulate—my life must now be *orientated towards Spain* and The Family. *Systematic destruction* of the *infantile* past represented by my Madrid friends, images which have no *real consistence.*[51]

Lorca was arrested and murdered by fascist sympathizers during The Spanish Civil War. Dalí's reorientation "towards Spain and The Family" has a certain paranoid logic that echoes the new "reality" in Franco's Spain.

In 1944, George Orwell, the outspoken British foe of fascism and icon of the independent left, criticized Dalí as much for his political allegiances during the Spanish Civil War as for his "diseased and disgusting" art. In a review of Dalí's autobiography, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí* (1942), Orwell acknowledged Dalí's extraordinary draughtsmanship and lauded the industriousness it must take to produce such detailed renderings. At the same time, he pronounced Dalí "an exhibitionist and a careerist."[52] Orwell unequivocably declared, however, that Dalí was not a fraud. Orwell's criticism centered around Dalí's moral degradation and society's responsibility for their support of his indecency. Moreover, in what now appears to

anticipate the political and religious disputes over certain postmodern art practices, Orwell wrote of *The Secret Life*:

> Now, if you showed this book, with its illustrations...to any "sensible" art-hating English person...they would flatly refuse to see any merit in Dalí whatever....People are too frightened either of seeming to be shocked or of seeming not to be shocked, to be able to define the relationship between art and morals.
>
> ...what the defenders of Dalí are claiming is a kind of *benefit of clergy*. The artist is to be exempt from the moral laws that are binding on ordinary people. Just pronounce the magic word "Art," and everything is O.K. Rotting corpses with snails crawling over them are O.K.; kicking little girls in the head is O.K....[53]

Later in the same essay, Orwell wrote:

> Dead faces, skulls, corpses of animals occur fairly frequently in his pictures, and the ants which devoured the dying bat make countless reappearances. One photograph shows an exhumed corpse, far gone in decomposition. Another shows the dead donkeys putrefying on top of grand pianos which formed part of the Surrealist film, *Un Chien Andalou.*[54]

In the end, Orwell, argued against censorship of Dalí. He favored instead both recognition of Dalí's talent as an artist and his failure as a good citizen. Orwell singled out passages from *A Secret Life* that portray Dalí as an impotent, power-hungry sadist, who relished humiliating others: a symptom of the failure of capitalism. He emphasized Dalí's cultivation of aristocratic and wealthy patrons, and his expedient reconciliation with the Catholic Church. To find out "*why* he exhibits [certain] aberrations" Orwell recommended looking at his paintings: to engage Dalí's debased art was tantamount to understanding contemporary societal ills.

Dalí's artist's statement in the catalogue for his 1941 one-man-show at Julien Levy Gallery outlined his new goal as a painter:

> Dalí has found once more the means of remaining alone and totally removing himself from that crowd of followers and imitators which he sees multiplying too rapidly about him, and he does this with a gesture of absolute originality, indeed: during these chaotic times of confusion, of rout and of growing demoralization, when the warmed over vermicelli of romanticism serves as daily food for the sordid dreams of all the gutter rats of art and literature, Dalí himself, I repeat, finds the unique attitude towards his destiny: To Become Classic! As if he has said to himself: 'Now or never.'[55]

"To Become Classic," Dalí borrowed heavily from the Italian Renaissance. In *Autumn Sonata* (1945) [Fig. 74] soldiers on horseback battle in front of a landscape of Roman ruins. Gala served as model for *Madonna of Port Lligat* (1949) [Fig. 75], a painting of the Madonna and child based on Piero della Francesca's Brera altarpiece. In *Raphaelesque Head Exploded* (1951) [Fig. 76], Dalí combined the imagery of the head of a Madonna based on Raphael with the Pantheon in Rome. In *Saint Helena of Port Lligat* (1956) [Fig. 77], Gala—in a pose derived from Michaelangelo's *Moses*—is represented as the mother of Constantine the Great. Christian dogma claims Helena motivated her son to adopt Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. Dalí's shift to a political ground—the society of kings and popes—became a means of identification with splendor and power. His surrealist paintings—executed under the influence of psychoanalytic theory—were complicated and suggestive. The "classic" paintings—made rigid by their theoretical design—are interesting mainly for illusionistic strategies designed to dazzle

and confound the viewer.[56] Lubar connects the Renaissance aesthetics of Dalí's postwar paintings to political exigencies:

> Dalí conceived his religious paintings as an expression of his return to Catholicism, an attitude that, in Franco's Spain, was politically suspect in the eyes of leftist intellectuals as a gesture of compliance with the regime. The question of Dalí's changing political and social sympathies is, however, complex, given the artist's early support for anarchist and Communist causes. There is no question that Dalí opportunistically exploited his return to Catholicism as a means to win favor in official circles.[57]

Lubar softens his indictment, however, by reminding us of Dalí's disillusionment with Leftist politics:

> The fact that he had been censored by André Breton on several occasions for his Hitlerian imagery and his use of academic painting techniques surely embittered Dali, who was in a position to question surrealism's much publicized commitment to the freedom of thought. Still, Dalí had options, and might well have retreated from the political arena entirely. However opportunistic his return to religion was, it surely did not resonate as an empty gesture in the context of postwar repression in his homeland.[58]

Dalí's aesthetic choices and decision to return to Franco's Spain continue to taint his reputation. In her review for The New York Times of Dalí's first major U.S. exhibition this century—"Dalí's Optical Illusions" at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, CT—Grace Glueck described the artist in terms that entered the Dalínian discourse over half-a-century ago:

> He was an aesthetic reactionary who looked to the past while the 20th century soldiered on with modernism. And he was an anti-democrat who expressed racist views, made light of Hitler and—though an early supporter of the Loyalist side in the

Spanish Civil War—accepted the Franco regime, returning to Spain after the dictator's victory.[59]

The appeal that classicism held for the bourgeois establishment and for right-wing political leaders certainly renders suspect Dalí's artistic engagement with the Great Tradition. The Fascist preference for classicism as a means to propagandize their political program still connects its traditions to political and social oppression. Dalí's decision "to become Classic," however, should be considered in conjunction with his obsession with his legacy. This culminated in his foundation of a museum devoted to preserving his art and reputation: the Teatro-Museo Dalí in Figueres.

iii.

Along with Dalí's "classic" style and questionable political allegiances, there is another aspect of his history that contributed to his marginalization from the modernist canon. His reputation has been damaged by the large quantity of forged Dalí graphic work that continues to flood the print market. Certainly some of these forgeries were produced with his cooperation. One author claims Dalí signed as many as 350,000 blank sheets of high-quality acid-free paper that he knew would be imprinted without his supervision at a later date.[60] As cultural attitudes continue to adjust to changing definitions of originality, a reconsideration of Dalí's alleged deceit becomes germane.

In his book *The Great Dalí Art Fraud and Other Deceptions*, Lee Catterall cited several incidents when authorities discovered thousands of

blank sheets of paper signed by Dalí. In 1974, for example, French customs agents found 40,000 signed sheets in a truck crossing into France from Andorra, Spain. Jean Lavigne, a French art publisher living in Palm Beach, Florida had hired the truck. At his trial, however, Lavigne successfully argued that it was legal to transport signed paper from Spain to France. There is no consensus of opinion on why Dalí would have signed the paper that caused this controversy. His need for money to support himself and Gala while he established the Teatro-Museo Dalí may have prompted him to participate in schemes that ultimately duped art purchasers. There is no evidence to suggest that his actions intended to push the limits of the concept of originality. It is, therefore, unlikely that Dalí's flagrant disregard for accepted practices concerning the authentication of prints can be regarded as an artmaking strategy. That said, it is notable that changes in the discursive determinations of art history have altered attitudes toward these allegations. Koons, for example, believes that Dalí may have been influenced by the methods of art production being explored at Warhol's Factory.

Gibson's comprehensive biography offers no evidence of any aim other than taking advantage of "the possibilities for making easy money provided by the multiples market." Gibson cites Emilio Puignau, a local man who "knew more about the painter's daily routine in Port Lligat than probably anyone else":

> Since I was a first-hand witness to their relationship I can vouch that [Dalí's business manager] Mr. Moore's attitude to Dalí was always very correct. However, there was one matter that was much discussed, repeated and even criticized. I refer to the signing of hundreds of leaves or sheets to be used for reproductions of Dalí's work.
>
> In his shack in the little street outside there were several boxes of these sheets, a table and Dalí sitting at it. I remember well those whole days that Dalí would spend signing in a totally automatic manner: a man placed a sheet on the table, Dalí would sign, and while he took it away someone else would put another in its place; and so on again and again as if it were a printing shop.
>
> I couldn't fathom that Dalí would submit to such a tiresome, and, particularly, boring chore which had nothing whatsoever to do with his art. I told him, once only, that I couldn't understand what it was all about, and I dared to say to him: 'If you sign so many blank sheets they'll be able to print any imitation they want on them, anything that looks like Dalí.' His reply was: 'I've already been paid what they offered for the work. So what they do with them's no concern of mine.'[61]

A. Reynolds Morse, an avid collector of Dalí's work and founder of the Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, corroborates the opinion that Dalí's motivation was purely financial. Gibson reports:

> After Gala's death, Reynolds Morse recalled that, when told that [the art dealer, Gilbert] Hamon was a crook, [Gala] had exclaimed: 'They are ALL crooks! Who cares! They pay us cash, so what difference does it make? Dalí painted the work. He can sell the rights to anyone he wishes, and as many times as he wants.' Morse was in no doubt that the corruption began with Gala and Dalí themselves.[62]

Lubar interprets Dalí's "extra-artistic activities" [without specifically mentioning the signed blank sheets of paper] as part of his artmaking strategy:

> To be sure, Dalí hedged his bets. Like a chess player working both sides of the table, he made a series of deliberate and highly publicized moves and countermoves whose aim was to subvert cultural and aesthetic hierarchies of all sorts. If Dalí's life and work have proved difficult to digest, it is because he flaunted his authentic brand of inauthenticity before a society hungry for metaphysical truth without succumbing to its recuperative mechanisms. On this level Dalí's cultural practice—for it constitutes more than work—is of a piece with Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol. Like them, Dalí was a simulator, not an inventor in the orthodox sense.[63]

Lubar is right to call for a repositioning of Dalí's life and work. The decline in Dalí's appeal among art professionals that took hold in the 1940s should not be allowed to obscure the very real accomplishments of his surrealist art—or his contribution to the history of modern art.

To consider Dalí's art in the context of surrealism is to witness his critical engagement with major currents of modernist thought. He took as his subject the inextricable nature of desire in looking, and the resultant limitations of vision as a means of determining truth, authenticity and accountability. Desire by definition is essentially subjective—a status which irretrievably locates it in the realm of the particular, a terrain far removed from the transcendent values celebrated by mainstream modernist artists and artwriters. To keep desire in play, Dalí built ambivalence and contradiction into the very fabric of his surreal representations. In this work, as in paranoid delusions, the real and the imagined, the structured and the fluid, the past and the future collapse. His paranoid-critical method produced paintings that represent the modern subject theorized by Lacan. As Foster wrote:

> Lacan does not specify his theory of the subject as historical, and certainly it is not limited to one period. However, this armored and aggressive subject is not just any being across history and culture: it is the modern subject as paranoid, even fascistic. Ghosted in his theory is a contemporary history of which fascism is the extreme symptom: a history of world war and military mutilation, of industrial discipline and mechanistic fragmentation, of mercenary murder and political terror. In relation to such events the modern subject becomes armored—against otherness within (sexuality, the unconscious) and otherness without (for the fascist this can mean Jews, Communists, gays, women), all figures of this fear of the body in pieces come again, of the body given over to the fragmentary and the fluid. Has this fascistic reaction returned? Did it ever go away? Does it rest within us all?[64]

In *The Return of the Real,* Foster proposed "nachtraglichkeit" or deferred action as a tool for structuring the meaning of modern art to postmodern artists:

> ...subjectivity, never set once and for all, is structured as a relay of anticipations and reconstructions of events that may become traumatic through this very relay. I believe modernism and postmodernism are constituted in an analogous way, in deferred action, as a continual process of anticipated futures and reconstructed pasts.[65]

Foster combined *nachtraglichkeit* with the notion of *parallax*, which considers the apparent displacement of an object when the position from which it is viewed changes. His method is an attempt to understand "what produces a present as different, and how does a present focus a past in turn?"[66] Foster's study reinforced my conviction that new light could be shed on Dalí's contribution to art history by considering his relevance to contemporary concerns.

Why does Dalí merit our attention? Because his persona and vision are

so symptomatic of our times. Dalí crystallizes the paranoiac circumstances pervasive in our society and confirms our suspicion that what we see is colored by a mixture of experience, memory, conjecture and imagination. At a time when visual images condition all aspects of daily life, the need to question them becomes fundamental. If "realism" refers to the literal representation of reality, then to call Dalí a "realist" is short-sighted. If "realism" means to (as frankly as possible) convey the cultural concerns of a given moment, then he clearly belongs in this category. His masterpieces of economy, grace and precision—including *Apparatus and Hand, Le Jeu lugubre, Accommodations of Desire* and *The Persistence of Memory*—capture the texture of quotidian reality by communicating both its precious order and terrible uncertainty. Moreover, they assure us that a canny approach to visual representation has a long history.

[1]William Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1968), 232.

[2] *Life Magazine* (October 11, 1948), "A Life Round Table on Modern Art: Fifteen Distinguished Critics and Connoisseurs Undertake to Clarify the Strange Art of Today."

[3]Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* (Fall 1939) as reprinted in John O'Brian, ed., *Clement Greenberg, The Collected Essays and Criticism*, Vol. I, *Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988).

[4]In *Downcast Eyes* Jay addressed the narrowness of this construction of modernism: "If Greenberg's formalist version of the modernist priviliging of the visual were the whole story, we would be confronted with the paradox that the antivisual discourse of the twentieth century was utterly at odds with the dominant artistic practice of the same era. However recent critics of Greenberg—such as Leo Steinberg, Rosalind Krauss, Victor Burgin, Hal Foster, Thierry de Duve, and P. Adams Sitney—have reopened the question of the purity of the visual in modernism," 160.

[5]See, for example, *Vision and Visuality*, Hal Foster, ed., Dia Art Foundation (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988), in particular Rosalind Krauss, "The Im/pulse to See," Jonathan Crary, "Modernizing Vision," and Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity."

[6]Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* trans. C. Lenhardt (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 340. Quoted in Bois, "Kitsch" in *Formless*, 117-118.

[7]Bois, *Formless,* 119.

[8]Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1972). Essays selected and translated by Annette Lavers, 142. Originally published in 1957 by Editions du Seuil, Paris.

[9]Ibid., 119.

[10]Ibid., 9.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Barthes, "Change the Object Itself," in *Image—Music—Text*. Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath (Farrar, Straus and Giroux: New York, 1977), 166.

[13]Ibid., 168.

[14]Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 93, 96.

[15]Lubar, Dalí Museum Collection, x.

[16] John Canaday, "Nostalgia and the Forward Look: Duchamp Surveys Surrealism and Dalí Forges Ahead in All Directions," *New York Times,* December 4, 1960, section II, 21. As quoted by Lubar, *The Salvador Dalí Museum Collection,* xiii. Lubar notes that "[T]he occasion for Canaday's remark was the International Surrealist Exhibition Marcel Duchamp organized for the D'Arcy Galleries in New York, to which Dalí submitted *The Enigma of William Tell*, among other controversial works, much to Breton's consternation."

[17]Hilton Kramer, "Turning the Apocalypse Into a Parfumerie," *The New York Times*, Sunday, March 22, 1970.

[18] Judith Goldman, in "Windows," published in the exhibition catalogue, *The Warhol Look: Glamour Style Fasion* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1997), discusses Dalí in conjunction with the Bonwit Teller windows incident,113.

[19]The relationship between Duchamp and Dalí was one of mutual admiration. In Robert Motherwell's introduction to Pierre Cabanne's *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* (New York: The Viking Press, 1971), Motherwell claimed that when Duchamp "was asked if he would like to write a preface...he replied that he would like his friend and summer neighbor in Cadaqués, Spain, Salvador Dalí, to do so." A testament to Dalí's appreciation of Duchamp can be found in The Hall of the Masterpieces in the Teatre-Museu Dalí at the Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí in Figueres where Dalí's personal collection of art is on view. Duchamp's *Boit en un valisse*

(1938) is displayed prominently in this gallery. In the museum catalogue, J. L. Giménez-Frontín writes: "Let it be recalled that the arrangement of all of these works around the hall has nothing to do with chronology, but rather with Dalinian associations of affinity and contrast, and that all of the pieces in this collection are by painters to whom Dalí wished to render a specific homage."

[20]Bice Curiger, *Hypermental: Rampant Reality 1950-2000 from Salvador Dalí to Jeff Koons* (Osfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2001), 10. "In his intellectual-alchemical, gender-anayltical art praxis," continued Curiger, "Marcel Duchamp is as important a point of reference for *Hypermental* as Salvador Dalí.

[21]Norman Bryson, "The Unfinished Project of Surrealism," *Hypermental,* 15.

[22]Jeff Koons interview by Angela Glass, Koons Studio, New York, NY, December 5, 2000.

[23]Robert Rosenblum, "Dream Machine," in exhibition catalogue, *Jeff Koons: Easyfun-Ethereal,* October 27, 2000-January 14, 2001, Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2000), 51-52.

[24]David Sylvester, "Jeff Koons Interviewed: New York City, February 6, 2000," *Jeff Koons: Easyfun-Ethereal,* 20-21.

[25]Rosenblum, "Dream Machine," 46.

[26]Ibid., 46, 49.

[27]Jeff Koons interview by Angela Glass.

[28]Foster, *The Return of the Real,* 114.

[29]Ibid., 112.

[30]Curiger, 11-12.

[31]Artist Biographies in exhibition catalogue, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, 2 October 1999-9 January 2000, *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 199.

[32]Glenn Brown, "Glenn Brown Interviewed by Marcelo Spinelli," catalogue essay for the exhibition *Glenn Brown* (Queen's Hall Arts Centre, Hexham and Karsten Schubert, London, 1996), 5.

[33]Lucy Lethbridge, "Star Wars," ARTnews February 2001 Vol. 100/no. 2, p. 49.

[34]Ibid.

[35] Matthew Buckingham, "Artist's Statement," for the exhibition *Greater New York Artists 2000* at P.S. 1, Brooklyn, New York, vol. 100 /no. 2, Spring 2000.

[36]Dalí, *The Conquest of the Irrational*, 91.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Curiger 10-11 citing Karin v. Maur, in *Salvador Dalí,* exhibition catalogue, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart and Kunsthaus Zürich, 1989, p xxxiii.

[39]Ibid., 11.

[40]Andreas Gursky, "...I generally let things develop slowly," *Andreas Gursky Fotografien 1994-1998*, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, 1998, viii. As cited in Lynne Cooke, "Andreas Gursky: Visionary (Per)Versions," essay in exhibition catalogue, *Andreas Gursky: Photographs from 1984 to the Present*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (New York: teNeues, 1998), 14.

[41]Peter Galassi, "Gursky's World," essay in exhibition catalogue, The Museum of Modern Art, March 4-May 15, 2001, *Andreas Gursky,* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2001), 23.

[42]Cooke, 14.

[43]Ibid., 16.

[44]Curiger, 11.

[45]Krauss, "The Phantom of Sex Appeal," essay in exhibition catalogue, Guggenheim Museum, June 4-September 12, 1999, *Surrealism: Two Private Eyes: The Nesuhi Ertegun and Daniel Filipacchi Collections*, Vol. 2, 723.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Galassi, 10.

[48]Ibid., 28.

[49]Ibid., 10.

[50]Salvador Dalí, 1939 letter to Luis Buñuel, Luis Buñuel Archive, Ministry of Culture, Madrid. Quoted in Gibson, 450.

[51]Ibid., 450-451.

[52]George Orwell, "Benefit of Clergy," *Dickens, Dalí and Others* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1946), 175.

[53]Ibid., 177.

[54]Ibid., 174.

[55]Salvador Dalí, exhibition catalogue, Julien Levy Gallery, New York, April 22-May 20, 1941. The text is reprinted in full in *The Collected Writings of Salvador Dalí,* ed. Haim Finkelstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 336-339. Quoted in Lubar, *Dalí Museum Collection,* 131.

[56]After Dalí returned to Spain he replaced a floor with glass so that he could have models pose above or below it to achieve dramatically foreshortened figures in his paintings. Dalí also increasingly depended on an assistant, Isidor Bea, to help him through all stages of the painting process.

[57]Lubar, *Dalí Museum Collection*, 134.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Grace Glueck, "Get Surreal: Repackaging Dalí for a New Generation," *The New York Times*, March 3, 2000, Section E, 52.

[60]Lee Catterall, *The Dalí Art Fraud and Other Deceptions* (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade Books, Inc., 1992), 61.

[61]Gibson, 604-5.

[62]Ibid., 605.

[63]Lubar, *Dalí Museum Collection*, xiv.

[64]Foster *The Return of the Real*, 210.

[65]Ibid., 207.

[66]Ibid., xiii.

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