

SCHOLASTIC

ART

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FEATURING
SALVADOR DALI

Surrealism

 SCHOLASTIC



COVER: Salvador Dalí (1904-1989). *The Face*, 1934. The Art Institute of Chicago

SCHOLASTIC

ART

Maurice R. Robinson, founder of Scholastic, Inc., 1895-1982

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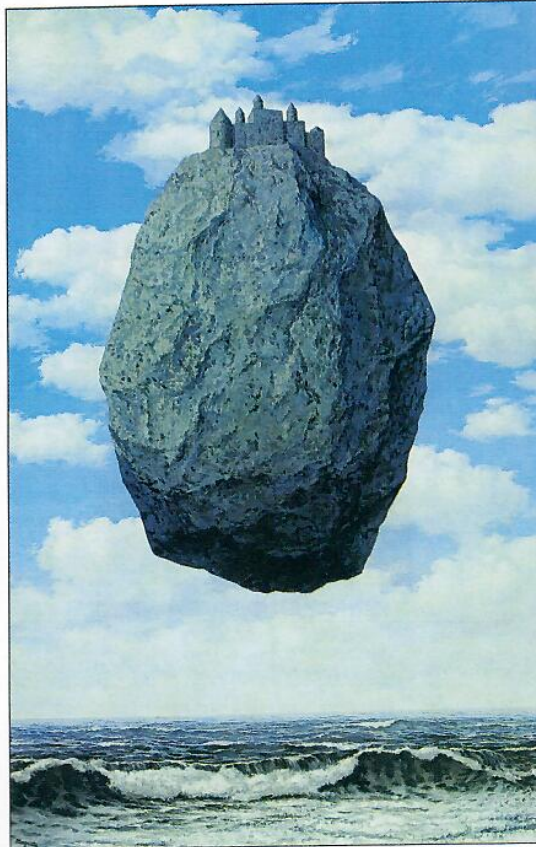
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"The most amazing visions appear to me and haunt me like nightmares." —SALVADOR DALI



What makes this scene so strange?

Rene Magritte (1898-1967).
The Castle of The Pyrenees, 1959.
 The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

Did you notice anything unusual about our cover this month? With this issue, Art & Man becomes Scholastic Art. Nothing else in the magazine will change—only the title. Why do you think we changed the name? Was this a good idea?

Imagine a world where castles float above the ocean, faces turn into rooms, and eyes seem to stare from shapeless mountains that rise out of a nightmare landscape. What kind of places are these and what kind of artists created them?

During the 1920s, Europe was recovering from the destruction caused by World War I. Many artists and writers of the time began rebelling against conventional values. One group called the *Surrealists* turned inward, escaping into a private reality based on dreams, memories, and feelings. The new science of psychology suggested that it is the "unconscious" mind that guides our inner feelings, fears, and desires, and that clues to this unconscious can be found in dreams. The Surrealists began

using fantasy techniques and images taken from dreams in their work.

Surrealist painters like René Magritte (ren-A mag-REET) in France, German artist Max Ernst, and Spaniard Salvador Dalí began painting a new kind of landscape filled with vast deserts, eerie spaces with looming shadows, and mysterious streets that seemed to lead nowhere. Some surreal images, like Salvador Dalí's painting on the cover, capture the disorientation and confusion of dreams in which images are not what they first appear to be. If you look at the face on the cover, it can also be "read" as a room—the eyes are pictures, the nose a fireplace, and the mouth is a sofa. In fact, the second part of the painting's

Imaginary WORLDS

title *The Face* reads, "Usable as a Surrealist Apartment."

Some Surrealists explored the new realm of the unconscious by working in a realistic manner, but they *reversed* the laws of nature. Try covering the top part of Magritte's painting *The Castle of the Pyrenees* (left), and look just at the ocean, or cover the bottom so you can see only the castle and part of the rock. Are these details very strange when they are seen by themselves? It is the image of a huge, heavy rock and castle *floating* above the ocean that

makes this work so disturbing.

Other Surrealist artists like Max Ernst created worlds in which everything is totally fantastic. Ernst actually painted in an "unconscious" manner, using new, unplanned techniques that required little conscious thought. The dripping, oozing, twining shapes and textures in *Eye of Silence* (below) were created by pressing two wet oil paintings together and pulling them apart.

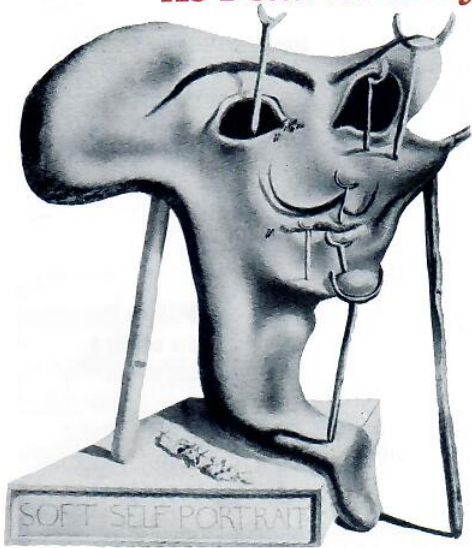
Is the work below a painting or the set for a science-fiction movie?

Max Ernst (1891-1976). *The Eye of Silence*, 1943-44. Oil on canvas, 42 1/2 x 55 1/2". Washington University, Gallery of Art, St. Louis, Missouri.



According to the self-portrait below, how did Salvador Dali see himself?

Soft Self Portrait with Fried Bacon (detail), 1941.



One of the strangest of the Surrealists was the Spanish artist Salvador Dali. Born in 1904 in a small town on the coast of Spain, Dali was a difficult and emotional child, whose moods swung abruptly from fits of rage to feelings of intense joy. Often he would wander alone, wrapped in his fantasies, on the deserted beaches and cliffs near his home. This empty, coastal landscape appears again and again in Dali's work, like the painting on pages 8-9 and the bizarre scene on the right.

This painting, called *The Weaning of Furniture-Nutrition*, is filled with objects based on Dali's childhood memories. The figure is a combination of two people—the nurse the artist had when he was young and a half-mad woman who lived on the beach. As a child, Dali found an old crutch on the beach; its shape appealed to him, and crutches appear in many of his works. "Chest of drawers" was a term Dali first heard as a child, and chests appear in many of the artist's paintings, like the ones in this work. A baby's (Dali's?) bottle sits on the smaller chest.

What is it about this work that makes it surreal? The landscape is sharp, clear, and real-looking; what makes it look more like a dream or a fantasy? First, objects are juxtaposed or joined together in unusual combina-

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"As I stared at my empty canvas, often images from my childhood would appear in a certain place. I would then paint them in that very spot." —SALVADOR DALI

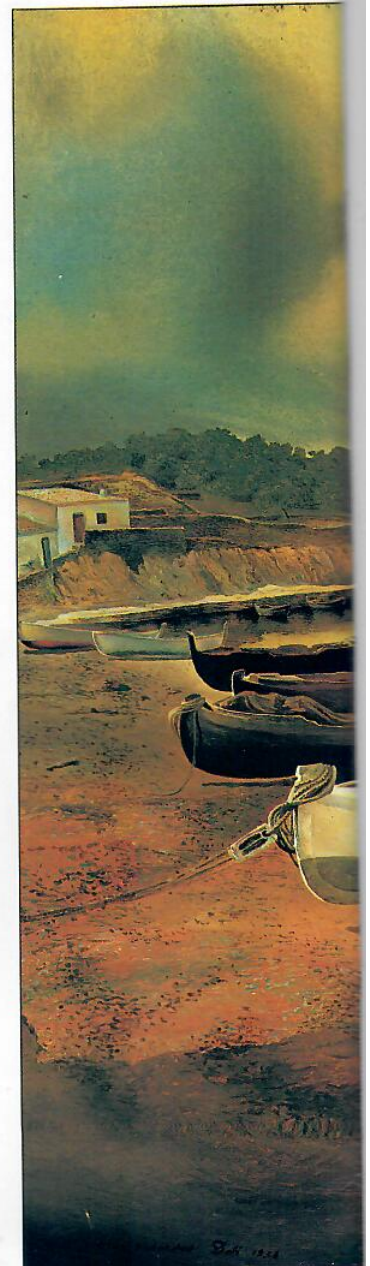
tions, like the chests of drawers on the beach or the crutch holding up the woman. **Natural laws are reversed**—the woman, who appears to be alive, has a hole through her back as if she were made of rubber or concrete. The **negative space** in her body is repeated by the **positive shape** of the chest. And, at what time of day do you think this scene has been set? The **light** is ominous as though a storm were about to break, or even a nuclear explosion. The yellowish colors suggest a dream, a memory, or perhaps a nightmare.

By the age of 12, Salvador Dali had decided to be an artist, and he later attended the School of Fine Arts in Madrid. Dali started school as a model student, but gradually he began doing things like wearing odd clothes and slicking down his hair with varnish. He rejected the ideas of his professors and started to search for new ways to express himself.

In 1928, the artist went to Paris where he met Surrealist painters, writers, and film makers. Through these artists, Dali discovered the ideas of the founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, and he felt that psychology held the answers to his own fantasies and inner torments. Soon Dali began to paint his dreams and memories, visualizing messages from his "unconscious" (Freud's term for forces inside us of which we are unaware). His *Soft Self-portrait* above, graphically expresses Dali's many fears and obsessions. Crutches of all sizes suggest the artist's need for constant emotional support.

What kind of feeling do you get when you look at the painting on the right by Salvador Dali?

The Weaning of Furniture-Nutrition, 1934. Oil on panel, 7 x 9 1/2".
Collection of The Salvador Dali Museum,
St. Petersburg, Florida.



THE FANTASTIC IMAGES OF Salvador Dali



SUR ↔ REAL

Landscapes

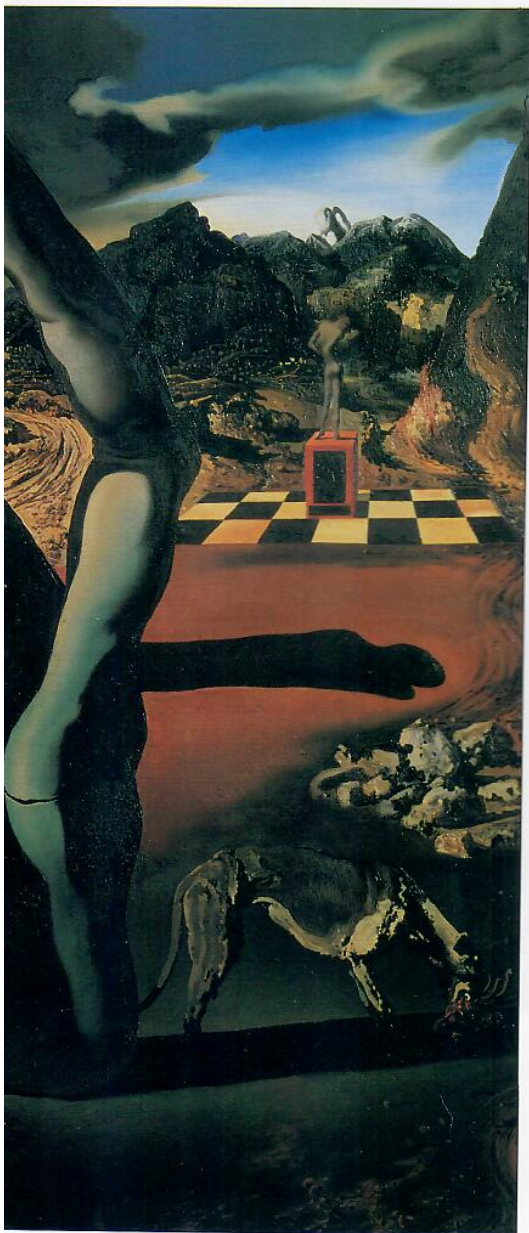
How did Salvador Dali paint some of the strangest landscapes ever created?



In the late 1920s, while he was living in Paris, Salvador Dali was struggling for recognition in the art world. But he was getting nowhere. He walked the city streets all day and all night, feeling

desperate. One night he finally decided to return to Spain on the next train.

Back home, in his little town on the rocky Spanish seacoast he again felt at peace. As he walked on the empty beaches, memories of his childhood came back to him. Strange images seemed to occupy his mind and he hurried to capture them in paint. He painted with no plan, in a spontaneous, automatic way, reacting to his feelings and letting them guide the way.



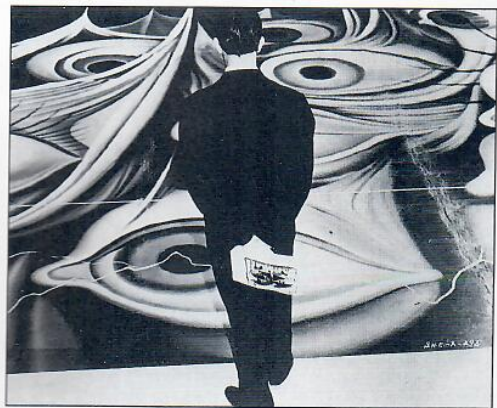
Dali's artistic style began to emerge after this experience, and during the next few years he made the world of dreams appear more real than reality ("sur-real"—or beyond reality). He took his memories, visions, and obsessions and turned them into bizarre landscapes like the one on the left. In this work, the artist retells the Greek myth of Narcissus, who looked into a pool, fell in love with his own reflection and drowned trying to reach it. This subject may have been an appropriate choice, for Dali, like Narcissus, was also obsessed with his own image.

In the painting *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus*, Dali **juxtaposes** a number of **incongruous** objects. He also uses the Surrealistic technique of **scale change**, making the hand on the right seem much larger than the figure of Narcissus on the left. Through the use of **double images**, objects seem to be transformed into something else. Narcissus melts into his own reflection, while the shapes that make up his figure are echoed and repeated in the hand on the right holding an egg in its bony fingers. Dali hints that the cycle of the myth will symbolically keep repeating itself as a new Narcissus flower sprouts from the cracked egg.

Dali's paintings are memorable because his bizarre images are set in such detailed, "real-looking" landscapes. The believable setting—the sand, the mountains, and the blue sky—of his most famous painting, *The Persistence of Memory* (see pages 8-9) makes the strange objects in the foreground seem even more puzzling and frightening. The watches look very real, except for one thing. They hang limply, as if they had been transformed into rubber. Ants crawl on one watch as though it had once been alive; another of the watches is draped over a rock that resembles a wet rag. This "rag" is actually a self-portrait of the artist, seen in profile and featuring an eyebrow and long, flowing eyelashes. Could this scene be suggesting a world where time dies and only fantasies, dreams, and memories remain behind?

MASTERPIECE OF THE MONTH

Preview



Dali stands on the surreal set he designed for Alfred Hitchcock's 1945 film *Spellbound*.

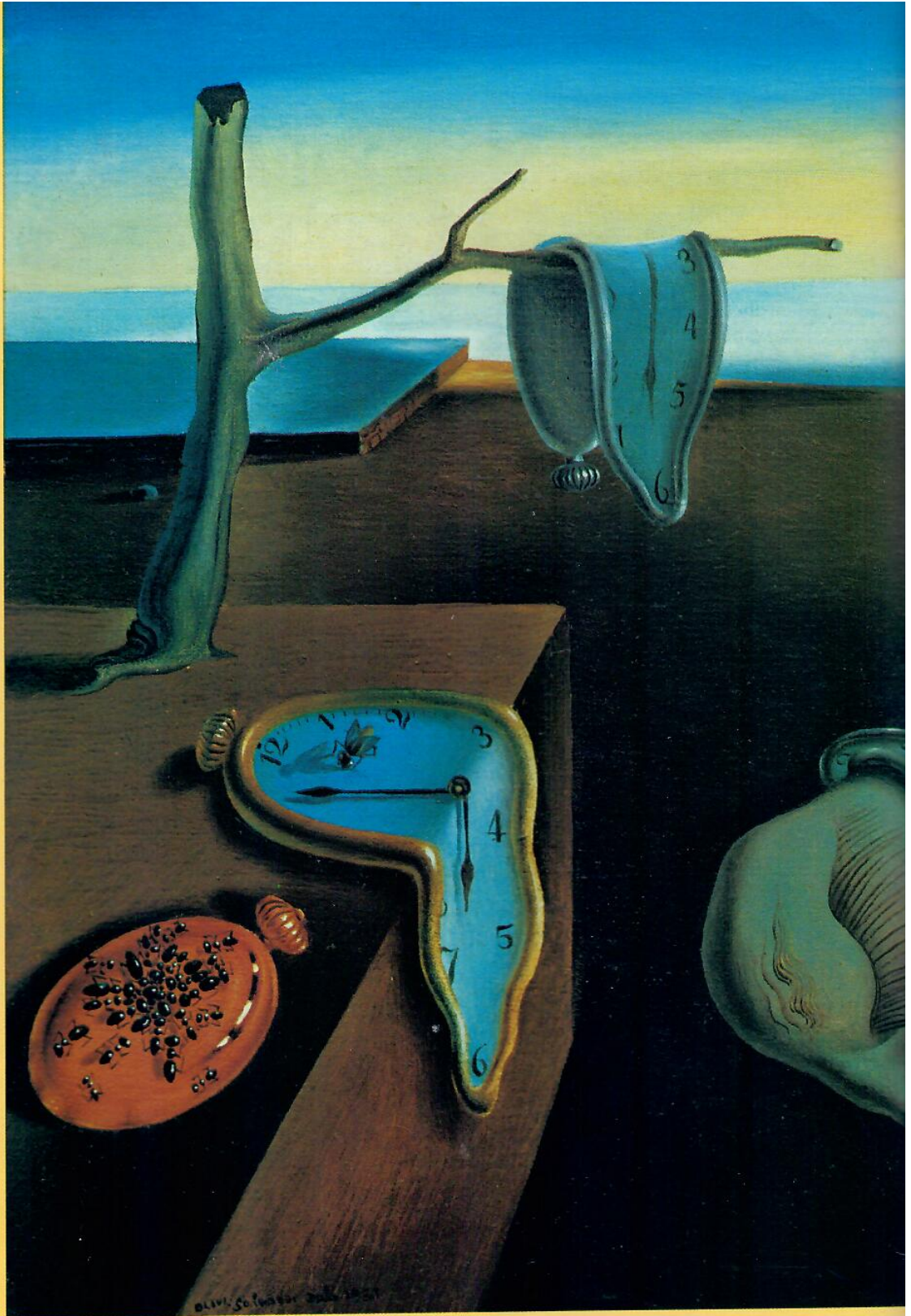
Courtesy of the British Film Institute.

Why do the two large shapes in the painting on the left look so much alike?

Metamorphosis of Narcissus, 1934. Oil on canvas, 20 x 30". Tate Gallery, London/Art Resource, New York City.

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MASTERPIECE OF THE MONTH # 4

The Persistence of Memory

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989). *The Persistence of Memory*



Persistence of Memory

Persistence of Memory, 1931. Oil on canvas, 9 1/2" x 13". The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

BY SALVADOR DALI



ART SPOTLIGHT



BRINGING DREAMS TO LIFE: Three artists who work with surreal images.

Is there anything unusual about this teacup?

Meret Oppenheim (1913–1985).
Object, 1936. Fur-covered cup,
saucer and spoon. The Museum of
Modern Art, New York.

Magical Objects

Shown above is one of the best-known Surrealist works of art, a sculpture by Swiss artist Meret Oppenheim called simply, *Object*. How does this object make you feel? Imagine drinking tea, or water, or any liquid from this cup! A favorite technique of the Surrealists was **transformation**—turning something familiar into something strange and disturbing. René Magritte—in his painting on page 2—took a very ordinary subject and **transformed** it by **dislocating** it.

In the same manner, Oppenheim **transforms** an everyday household object simply by presenting it in a different material. The sensation of drinking from wet fur is heightened by Oppenheim's *design*. She brings the viewer's attention to the sculpture's two main **focal points** by wrapping the lip of the cup and the bowl of the spoon in fur that is **darker** and is more **heavily textured**.

Like Dorothea Tanning, Meret Oppenheim was an early

Surrealist. Born in Switzerland, at 18 she went to Paris to study art. She was the subject of many striking photographs taken by Surrealist photographer Man Ray. In 1933 she exhibited her own work with the Surrealists. Meret Oppenheim created other well-known surreal **transformations**—she turned a pair of women's high-heeled shoes into a holiday bird served on a silver platter. In another work, a mirror seemed to become the face reflected in it.

Nightmare Worlds

The title of the work on the right done by American Surrealist Dorothea Tanning is *Guardian Angels*. The **abstract** quality of the **dissolving forms and textures** in this painting obscure the subject but create an ominous, sinister atmosphere. Can you find the small female figures that are being swept up from their beds by winged beings that could hardly be called guardian angels?

Like Dali and other Surrealists, Tanning creates each of her paintings spontaneously, allowing dream images and accidents to guide her imagination. The monstrous flying creatures on the right were a result of this spontaneous technique and may represent forces of the unconscious. The **swirling shapes and monochromatic** (basically one

color) **hues** in this work add to the nightmarish impression.

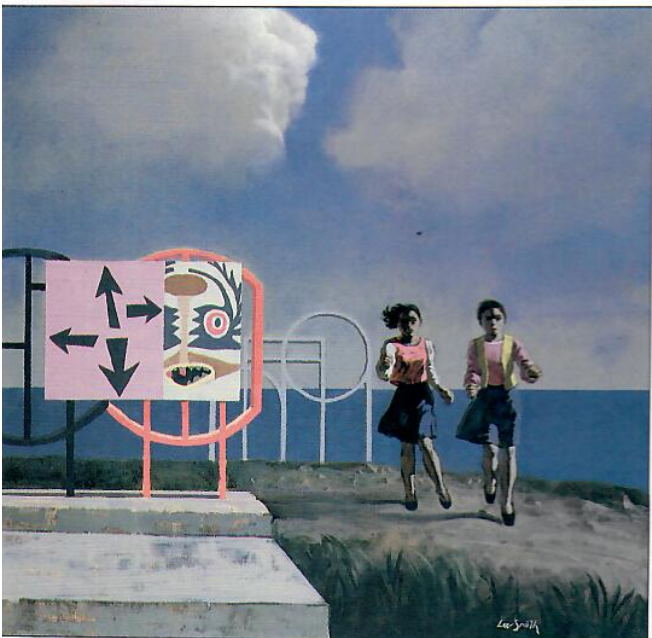
Dorothea Tanning could be considered one of the original Surrealists. Born in Illinois, she came to New York in 1936, where she met many of the leading Surrealists who had moved from Europe to escape World War II. Tanning's career was overshadowed by that of her husband, Surrealist Max Ernst (page 3), but her work is now recognized for its own distinctive qualities.

What kind of dream do you think is going on in this painting?

Dorothea Tanning b. 1912. *Guardian Angels*, 1946. Oil on canvas, 48" x 36".
New Orleans Museum of Art.



Painted Memories



In the recent painting (left) by contemporary American artist Hughie Lee-Smith, two girls appear to be running toward us. But when you look closely, do these two figures look to you as though they are actually moving? And in what type of setting are they placed? To the left of the figures are a number of shapes—what do all these forms mean? One of the signs features a giant face, while the other contains a set of arrows that point in four different directions. Everything is very realistically painted, but this only seems to make the meaning of

What is it about the painting on the left that gives it a surreal feeling?

Hughie Lee-Smith b. 1915. *Crossroads*, 1991. Oil on canvas, 32 x 34".
June Kelly Gallery, New York City.

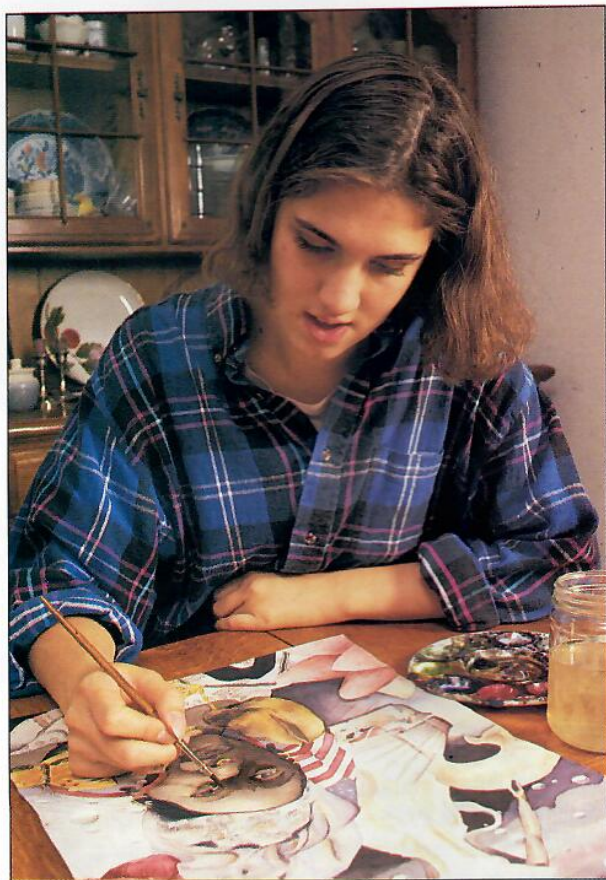
this painting *Crossroads* even more puzzling.

Like the Surrealists, Hughie Lee-Smith sets his scene in a **deep, clear space** that is very "real-looking." The vast expanse of water in the background and the blue sky overhead add to the mysterious nature of the scene. But it is the suspended quality of the figures who seem frozen, almost like statues, and their **juxtaposition** with the slightly sinister signs on the left that give this picture its ominous *surreal* quality. What are the signs and why are they there? Are they decorations; directions; symbols; messages; threats? Why is this painting called *Crossroads*? There is a sense of loneliness and alienation in this work. In this painting, Hughie Lee-Smith has created a dream-like world, a memory suspended in time and space.

Autumn Hulslander: A SURREAL VISION



What is so strange about the very realistic-looking picture on the right of two creatures that appear to be lizards? Did you notice the tiny cows at the bottom when you first looked at this picture? Seventeen-year-old Autumn Hulslander painted this Scholastic Art Award-winning watercolor last year when she was a junior at Enloe High School in Raleigh, North Carolina. In addition to painting, Autumn designs and makes costumes for her school's plays. She also likes to make sushi, which she learned to prepare while she was an exchange student in Japan during the summer of 1990.



Autumn likes to paint in watercolor because it allows her to work spontaneously.

■ **Have you always been interested in art?**

Yes, ever since I was two or three years old. When I was little, my parents used to ask us every Sunday night to draw a picture of something exciting that had happened to us during the week. Because of that, I learned to express myself best through pictures instead of words.

■ **How did you come to do this award-winning picture?**

My art teacher requires three projects during an 18-week semester. We're free to do whatever interests us. I like to work with plants, flowers, and nature and often flip through magazines for ideas. I was looking through a travel magazine one day and I saw these lizards. I loved the shape of them. I loved their texture and color. They were sitting on a beautiful bronze dish in the photograph. Their curved shapes and the spaces between seemed to fit right together. So I decided to paint them somehow.

■ **Did you work entirely from a photograph?**

Sometimes. But I didn't put two photographs together. I took the lizards, and tried to find something unusual to put behind them. I saw a background that I liked in a magazine. It was a field with black streaks from the fencing. The cows were in another article.

■ **How did you come up with your idea?**

Most of the stuff I do is kind of odd. I like mixing things that wouldn't normally be mixed together. I put them together in a way that would never occur naturally. In this picture, I decided to flip-flop nature in terms of scale. I've drawn lots of cows. They're so big and funny-shaped. I thought it would be ironic to make the large cows small and insignificant. The tiny lizards could be big and dominant for a change. I guess the scale change makes the painting look surreal. It's something that couldn't really occur in nature.

In this picture, I decided to flip-flop nature in terms of size and scale...I thought it would be ironic to make the tiny lizards big and dominant for a change.

■ **How did you do your painting?**

First I drew a sketch of what I wanted. Then I started to paint it with watercolors. I began working on the bronze plate and the lizards with a dry brush. I started out using very light colors then built up to darker tones. I used a small brush to detail the lizards' heads. With the field, I worked more loosely. I put down a big wash of color. Then I sprinkled salt over it, to add more granular detail. If the salt is done correctly, it gives a very textural feel.

■ **Why did you use watercolor?**

I can't picture lizards in anything but watercolor. The transparent quality of watercolor gives a light, airy feel to the picture. The lizards appear to be floating. I love watercolor. It's my favorite medium because it moves so freely. It isn't heavy like oils and acrylics. You can add so many different things for interesting effects—salt, wax, crayons—even scrape it with forks and knives.

■ **Why did you place the cows up in front?**

I put the cows in last. In my picture, the field seemed deep and far away at the top. So I put the

cows in the front to balance the composition and add a black-and-white accent.

■ **How long did it take to finish your painting?**

It took me about two months. I'm a very slow painter. I'm a perfectionist. I knew I was done, when I was satisfied it was good.

■ **How did people respond to the painting?**

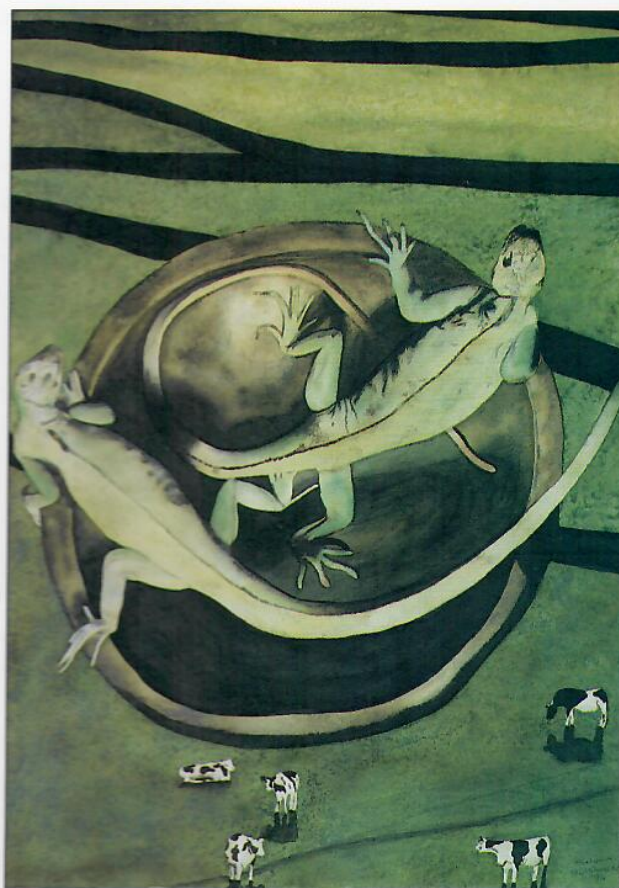
I got a lot of positive feedback. My classmates and teachers thought it was neat to combine the lizards and cows. They thought it was great. That felt good. It inspired me to keep working.

■ **Did you want the viewer to walk away with an idea?**

I wasn't thinking of a message while I was painting. The feeling I had, I guess, is that the small can be large sometimes. The large can also be small. It's a different way of looking at things.

■ **Who are your favorite artists and why?**

I like Salvador Dali. He's so interesting. His work is so grotesque. He sees and paints things I would never think about. I also love Georgia



O'Keeffe because of her wonderful colors and large shapes. I like the way she works from nature but changes it.

■ **What do you think it takes to be an artist?**

A lot of commitment. It takes a lot of time and practice too. Plus a knowledge of yourself and what you want to accomplish with your art.

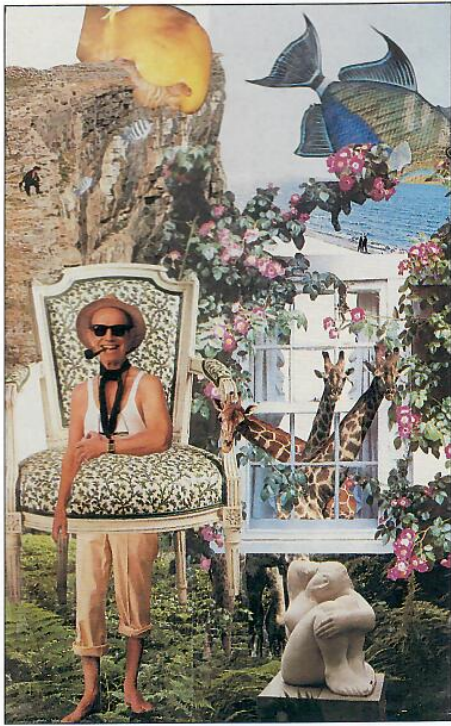
■ **What are your future plans?**

I don't have any definite plans yet. But I don't think I'm going to be a full-time artist. That's a very risky profession. Instead, I'd love to teach or work in a museum. I really enjoy art history.

■ **What advice do you have about art?**

Don't be afraid to express yourself through art. Education always stresses expressing yourself through writing. But I think communicating to others through art is just as important.

We select our Artist of the Month only from among students who have won medals in the current Scholastic Art Awards Program. To enter, ask your teacher to write to the Scholastic Art Awards, 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003 for entry deadlines and rules books.



VISUALIZING A FANTASY

*Create a world
as surreal as any shown in this issue.*

Salvador Dali and the Surrealists used inner feelings and dream images to create their bizarre and unusual scenes. One of their favorite means of expression was *collage*. Through the combination of visuals taken from a number of sources—photographs, magazines, newspapers, old prints—surrealist artists were able to capture the disorientation and upheaval they were feeling in the years following the First World War (1914-1918). Are there any recent political or personal events that you would like to express

your feelings about? In this workshop, you'll pick a theme, then create a fantasy collage using many of the ideas first developed by the Surrealists.

Prepared by Ned J. Nesti, Jr., Morrison (IL) High School.
Assisted by Sara Domdey. Photos by Larry Gregory.



Materials

- Variety of old (1940s-70s) and contemporary magazines
- Elmer's Glue-All or rubber cement
- X-Acto knife
- 12" x 18" oak tag paper (size to be determined by each artist)
- Cutting board (or use mat board scraps instead)



Starting Out

Step 1. Decide on a *theme*. Will your collage be political; humorous; dreamlike; psychological; based on a fantasy or interest? Collect some related magazine images. Remove entire page.

Step 2

Select clear, recognizable images which *symbolize* your idea. Lay them out in different combinations—your theme should begin to evolve. *Balance* composition *symmetrically* (both sides exactly the same) or *asymmetrically* (sides not the same but visually equal). Do not glue down.

Step 3

Foreground, middleground, background should be clear. Large background areas will unify work. Carefully cut out images. Arrange and rearrange. One image should serve as *focal point*. May use *fragments* or *combinations*. Images should *contrast* and *overlap* to emphasize *depth*. Avoid overcrowding; *simple* compositions work best. Glue down final composition using pin point dots of glue.



Some Solutions

Can you guess the *theme* of each of the collages on the left? Finding the *focal point* may give you a clue. Which of these works seems political; which reminds you of science fiction; which might be based on particular personal fantasies? Which of these artists has used **juxtaposition of incongruous objects** to achieve a surreal effect? Which artists used **dislocation** (objects are moved to a strange new environment)? How is **levitation** (heavy objects that float) used in many of these works? Do **scale changes**—small objects are large/large objects become small—create fantastic effects? In which of these works does a **metamorphosis**—one object changing into a different but related object—take place? Which **natural laws are reversed** in each of these collages? How has each of these artists used *asymmetrical balance*—shapes and spaces appearing visually equal?

"My ambition is to produce the most irrational visions by means of the most technically precise, concrete, and realistic images I am able to create."—SALVADOR DALI

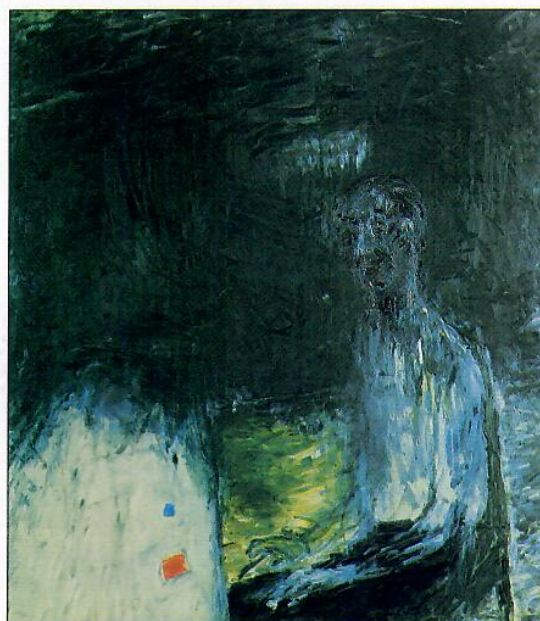
These two modern artists have brought Surrealism up to date.

Haunted Figures

"I wasn't intending to paint a figure, but all of a sudden there was a face on the canvas. All I did was to add the body." Contemporary American artist Susan Rothenberg describes the way in which she created the painting on the right.

Like the early Surrealists, Rothenberg communicates her own private reality based on memories, impulses, and feelings. Compare this painting to those in this issue by Salvador Dali. Dali's images are very clear while Susan Rothenberg's ghostly world is visually hard to make out. She **builds up** her images by using a series of spontaneously applied brushstrokes.

The work shown here, called *A Golden Moment*, is based on a dream Rothenberg had about



How does this painting capture the spirit of Surrealism?

Susan Rothenberg, b. 1945. *A Golden Moment*, 1985. Oil. Sperone-Westwater Gallery, NY.

the early 20th-century Dutch artist Mondrian. Mondrian is best known for his abstract designs containing blue and red rectangles. At the bottom of this painting you can see two small, brightly colored floating shapes. A magical yellow light gleams around the artist's hand

and paintbrush. Like the Surrealists, Rothenberg does not regard creation as a rational act. In this work, perhaps Susan Rothenberg is suggesting that when the "golden moment" of creation comes, the artist can only sit back, smile, and allow it to be present.



What do you think is going on in this painting?

Antonio M. Ruiz (1897-1964). *The Soprano*, 1949. Collección Acervo Patrimonial de la Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público de México, Mexico City.

Impossible Songs

This figure painting (left) of a woman singing, done by twentieth century Mexican artist Antonio Ruiz (Roo-Ez), is as clear and detailed as Susan Rothenberg's is indefinite and mysterious. Ruiz's surreal scene also contains a touch of satire. The Spanish word *gallo* means both "rooster" and "false musical note." So when someone sings badly, people say "a rooster comes out of his/her mouth." How do you think this woman's audience is reacting to her song?

Compare this painting to the other works in this issue. Although *Soprano* is based more

on a "real" situation than a dream, this work still has many surreal qualities. How are **natural laws reversed** in this picture? Like the large rock in René Magritte's painting on page 2, the rooster **levitates**, or floats mysteriously in the air, a favorite Surrealist device. The bird's **dislocation**—it really shouldn't be in this setting—and its **juxtaposition** with the soprano, give this scene a fantastic quality. The attention to detail—the curtains, the picture frame, the portrait in back—adds to the strange, uneasy feeling produced by this work.