

# Re-thinking Surrealism:

## Shock, Disturb and Surprise

Stockholm 21 - 22 November 2009



KODAK SAFETY FILM



Salvador Dalí Foto: Anna Riwkin

MODERNA MUSEET

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In late November, a few of the world's most prominent experts on Dalí will gather in Stockholm for a two-day international symposium, *Re-thinking Surrealism: Shock, Disturb and Surprise*. Speakers from the UK, Spain, France, Italy and the USA will give highlights from recent research on Salvador Dalí and surrealism. Discussions on some of the theories behind the exhibition *Dalí Dalí featuring Francesco Vezzoli* will analyse Dalí's influence on contemporary artists such as Francesco Vezzoli. Welcome to two days of talks and presentations, including unique documentary film footage.

The symposium is intended for researchers in related fields and the art-loving public.

Arranged by Moderna Museet in collaboration with the Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacies, University of Manchester, Instituto Cervantes, Stockholm University and Södertörn University.

**Sponsored by Stiftelsen Riksbankens Jubileumsfond.**

**Venue** Moderna Museet, Auditorium  
**Time** 21-22 November, 11 am – 4 pm  
**Tickets** SEK 200 (Friends of Moderna Museet SEK 100), including refreshments and admission to the exhibition.

Tickets can be booked through [www.ticnet.se](http://www.ticnet.se). Any remaining tickets will be sold at Moderna Museet on 21 November from 10 am.

**Languages** English, Spanish (simultaneous interpretation)  
**Contact** Karin Malmquist, [k.malmquist@modernamuseet.se](mailto:k.malmquist@modernamuseet.se)

## **Participants:**

**Dawn Ades**, professor of Art History, University of Essex, co-director of the Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacies

**David Lomas**, professor of Art History, University of Manchester, and co-director of Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacies

**Pilar Parcerisas**, Barcelona, PhD in Art History, art critic and curator

**Frédérique Joseph Lowery**, PhD, art critic and exhibition curator

**William Jeffett**, PhD, curator, Salvador Dalí Museum, St. Petersburg, Florida

**Francesco Vezzoli**, artist

**Lars Nittve**, director, Moderna Museet

**Ulf Eriksson**, curator, Moderna Museet

**Nicholas Descharnes**, Paris, head of Archives Descharnes

# Programme Re-thinking Surrealism: Shock, Disturb and Surprise

21 November

11.00

**Welcome**, Lars Nittve, director, Moderna Museet

11.10

**Introduction**, Karin Malmquist, curator, Moderna Museet

11.20

**The Architectonic Angelus of Millet.** Dawn Ades, Professor of Art History, Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacies. Salvador Dalí applied his paranoiac-critical method to Jean-François Millet's painting *The Angelus* (1857-59), a painting that had fascinated and inspired him since the 1930s. Dawn Ades analyses Dalí's interpretation of *The Angelus* in his book, *The Tragic Myth of Millet's 'Angelus'*, and the ways he transforms this famous devotional image in his own works. Dalí had a lifelong relationship to Millet's painting, and it is one of many examples of how Dalí reverts to, and re-processes, a subject. The ambiguous nature of the sacrilege Dalí performs in his treatment of the Angelus theme in the 1930s is startlingly revealed in his later painting, *Perpignan Station* (1965).

11.50

**Divine Dalí.** David Lomas, Professor of Art History, University of Manchester, Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Surrealism and its Legacies. The talk considers how Dalí remakes his artistic identity on the model of a screen celebrity during the 1930s and 1940s, not coincidentally a period of his close involvement with Hollywood. Dalí's adoption of narcissus as a personal myth is a consequence of his immersion in this world. The term "divine", David Lomas shows, points contradictorily to Dalí's obsession with Leonardo da Vinci at the same time that it evokes a contemporary, cinema-derived idea of fame. Divine Dalí is a prescient harbinger of later artists like Warhol and Vezzoli who explore what it means to be an artist in an age of celebrity.

12.35 Lunch

14.00

**Mae West done wrong by Vezzo[da]li.** Frédérique Joseph Lowery, PhD, art critic and exhibition curator. By using Mae West's face as a surrealist apartment, Salvador Dalí opened up a space for the display of his own art. "Come up and see me some time", Mae West famously said in *She done him wrong*. Dalí indeed modified the poster of this movie to touch up the face of the Broadway star. Vezzoli responded to this logic by also using Dalí's "face" in order to display his own embroidered/painted works. He drew upon the medium of cinema instead of theatre. Frédérique Joseph Lowery explores Vezzo[da]li's "interface". She examines how Dalí's collaboration with major choreographers, allowed him to present his works on international theatre stages. This also built the conceptual foundation of his Theatre-Museum.

14.45 Break

15.15 – 16.00

**L'Histoire prodigieuse de la Dentellière et du Rhinocéros.** Nicolas Descharnes, runs Archives Descharnes, in Paris. His father, Robert Descharnes, was a photographer and a close friend of Salvador Dalí. The two men worked together on the unfinished film *L'Histoire prodigieuse de la Dentellière et du Rhinocéros*, (The Prodigious Adventure of the Lacemaker and the Rhinoceros). Nicolas Descharnes talks about the film project and presents exclusive raw material from the film.

## 22 November

11.00

**Introduction**, Karin Malmquist, Moderna Museet

11.10

**Dalí and Politics (1951-1974)** William Jeffett, PhD, Chief Curator, Exhibitions at the Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, address how Dalí projected himself as a public figure within the landscape of post-war politics. In part he situated himself, in relation to Picasso's identification with communism, as an anti-communist, identifying his public image within the US perspective of the cold war. In the 1940s, Dalí famously painted Franco's ambassador to the US. Shortly thereafter Dalí sought a rapprochement with Franco's Spain constructing himself as the consummate Spanish artist. Dalí's contrarian position persisted well beyond the onset of the cold war. As late as the early 1970s, and at a time when arguably there was no opportunistic advantage, he continued the reaffirmation reactionary positions.

11.55 **Break**

12.15

**Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp. Elective Affinities. The 20th Century Painting Machine.** Pilar Parcerisas, PhD in Art History, art critic and curator. The friendship between Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp played a major role in the evolution of 20th century painting. Both had ideas about a new pictorial conception based on the research of a new representational system. Marcel Duchamp achieved this through the creation of his erotic "machines célibataires", like *The Large Glass* (1914-1923), while Salvador Dalí conceived the paranoiac-critical method. Their attitudes were derived from the literature of the late 19th century and taken to the world of the pictorial space. Pilar Parcerisas talks about the still not fully explored relationship between Salvador Dalí and Marcel Duchamp, not only regarding their personal friendship, but also from an aesthetical point of view.

13.00 **Lunch**

14.15

**Conversation** between the artist Francesco Vezzoli and Ulf Eriksson, curator Moderna Museet.

14.45 – 16.00

**Panel discussion** with all the speakers. Moderator: Dawn Ades.