

Salvador dali's history backriound

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



Salvador Dali Salvador Dali was a prominent 20th century surrealist artist. Born in Spain in 1904, Dali would become one of most seminal artists of the last century before his death in 1989 (Moorhouse). His parents had a strong influence on his development and artistic practices as his father's strict disciplinarian approach contributed to Dali's structured pursuit of art, while his mother's creative nature influenced his artistic process (Moorhouse). In 1922 Dali moved to Madrid and lived in the Residencia de Estudiantes. During this time he came into contact with surrealist artist and filmmaker Luis Bunuel and poet Federico Garcia Lorca. Both of these individuals would have tremendous influence on Dali's artistic methods, as well as the medium of his artistic production. In 1926 he would leave Spain and move to Paris, where he came into contact with Pablo Picasso (Moorhouse). While Dali had experimented with Cubist methods during this time in Madrid, it was clear that he did not fully understand the genre. During the next few years Dali would produce work heavily influenced by Picasso and fellow surrealist Joan Miro. Dali would then go on to combine a broad variety of influences into his work. Among these influences included academia, classical and modernist techniques, as well as recent psychological explorations by psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. Through World War II and his later life Dali would increasingly focus on his unique approach to surrealist art. When examining Dali's art it's clear that there are a number of notable elements related to subject matter, content, meaning, and iconography. One notes that in examining Dali's art within this context of understanding that his work has shifted during different periods of the artist's life. Still, throughout these periods Dali implemented characteristic forms of oil on canvas in

constructing his works (Seckel). During Dali's formative years he became primarily interested in exploring abstract notions with a particular cubist style (Neret). As Dali expanded his work a variety of consistent techniques emerged throughout his work. In these regards, Dali frequently sets his paintings in desert lands, or environments of strong desolation. In terms of underlining intentions, Dali is noted to have implemented a process of paranoiac-critical method of accessing the subconscious (Neret). This subject matter is witnessed in his art as distinctive iconography, such as clocks, animals, or statues bend and contort in mind-bending ways. The intention being that these forms of art are meant to express hidden sub-conscious modes of thought. In terms of political intentions, Dali remained conspicuously ambiguous. His ambivalent stance is significant, as the surrealist movement he was a part of heavily influenced he assumed a stringently leftist political stance (Neret). In addition, Dali is noted to have become estranged from one time colleague and friend Luis Bunuel after the later assumed a communist political stance and became an atheist (Neret). As Dali's style developed he increasingly explored the implementation of illusions into his work, as well as an increasing exploration of spirituality through the inclusion of religious imagery such as the Virgin Mary into his paintings. One of Dali's most prominent works of art is 'The Persistence of Memory'. This work was created in 1931 and implements oil on canvas in its depiction of surrealist imagery (Seckel). In terms of art elements, one notes that Dali uses muted tones of brown, yellow, and blue as a means of creating a surreal-like dream state. Dali expertly juxtaposes sharp and distinct lines with purposely-blurred lines that meld into the each other as a means of

further advancing the surreal structure. The same is clear of the work's shapes, such as a sharp drawn desk that is contrasted with a melting clock. In terms of principles of design, Dali's work has a particular balance with the iconographic imagery seen prominently in the foreground balanced against the image of a cliff in the far back. The images also display significant variety, as forms of modernization such as a clock are balanced against an otherwise desolate desert backdrop. Indeed, Dali's uses repetition with this clock imagery, making it a central aspect of the work. When interpreting the work it's clear that it actively resists objective interpretation. Still, the work seems to play on sub-conscious notions of time through its implementation of the melting clocks. In these regards, it seems that the work is exploring notions of modernization in the face of humanity's more base instinctual drives and urges. References Moorhouse, Paul. Dali. Thunder Bay Press. 2002. Neret, Robert. Salvador Dali. New York: Taschen. 2007. Seckel, Al. Masters of Deception: Escher, Dali & Artists of Illusion. Sterling. 2007.