

Salvador dali
biography a mad
fantasy film studies
essay



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A Mad fantasy As a child he was frequently expelled from school. He was afraid to expose his feet. He was afraid of germs and especially grasshoppers. When in public, he would jump up and down to get attention. He was kicked out of the official surrealist society. His nick name was "Avida Dollars", which, roughly means "greedy for dollars". He spent much of his life promoting himself and shocking the world. Undoubtedly, many people probably thought he was crazy. He himself said, - "There is only one difference between a madman and me. The madman thinks he is sane. I know I am mad." But... while looking at his paintings; we enter in an unpredictable world of the dreams. Hard and solid objects appear soft and malleable in his paintings. Or inanimate objects appear alive and conscious. It's as though the normal laws of science no longer apply to the people and objects in Dali's created world. We'll see many of these strange transformations in Dali's painting. Why has measured time, stopped and melted? Why swans are reflecting like elephants? Why animals have long legs like insects? And what are the hidden faces in the paintings. There are no answers to these questions. The world of this painting is ruled by long horizons. It is like haunting. We return to the painting again and again trying to solve the puzzle. Dali called these paintings, 'hand-painted dream photographs.' The threefold nature of our temporal existence –with a past, a present and a future—lies open before us. Dali put these mysterious hybrids into his paintings, like telling a dream. Dali's artistic style is a blend of precise realism and dreamlike fantasy. Salvador was also a sculptor, filmmaker, writer, jewellery designer, book illustrator and worked in theatre. Wherever he went, he stood out. He seemed to love controversy. His public antics were often talked about more than his art. He was eccentric and did <https://assignbuster.com/salvador-dali-biography-a-mad-fantasy-film-studies-essay/>

crazy things to attract attention to himself and his art. At the age of 37 he wrote his autobiography, ' The Secret Life of Salvador Dali'. Dalí opens the book with the statement: " At the age of six I wanted to be a cook. At seven I wanted to be Napoleon. And my ambition has been growing steadily since."

Reincarnated Image
Dali was born on 11 May 1904, the second-born son of Salvador Dalí Cusí and Felipa Domènech Ferrés. The family lived in Figueres town which was located closely to the French border in Catalonia, Spain. His father was a middle class lawyer and notary. He had a strict disciplinary approach to raising children. Mother encouraged Dali greatly in his artistic pursuits. At the age of 5, Dali was taken to his brother's grave. His older brother also named Salvador Dali, who died in infancy only nine months before Dali's birth. Dali was told by his parents that he was a reincarnated image of his brother's which Dali soon started believing. Of his brother, Dali said: "... [we] resembled each other like two drops of water, but we had different reflections." He " was probably a first version of myself but conceived too much in the absolute." At the age of four, the young Dali began his formal education at public school in Figueres. Dali disliked school, and spent much of his time daydreaming instead of studying. He hated the feeling of being confined to the classroom. During summer he enjoyed the freedom of his childhood in the seaside town of Cadaques. There he studied painting with Ramon Pichot, a local artist who made regular trips to Paris. Pichot was a good friend of Pablo Picasso. It was through Pichot's guidance and his collection of Impressionist paintings, that Dali discovered Impressionism. In 1910, Salvador Dali painted one of his earliest known works, the " Landscape Near Figueras" when he was about six years old. This painting is one of the purest examples of Dali's impressionist period. Dali's <https://assignbuster.com/salvador-dali-biography-a-mad-fantasy-film-studies-essay/>

father organized an exhibition of his son's charcoal drawings in their family home. This was his first exhibition. In February 1921, Dali's mother died of breast cancer. Dali was sixteen years old at that time. Mother's death was the greatest blow to him. He worshipped her. After her death, Dali's father married his wife's sister. Dali did not resent this marriage because he had a great love and respect toward his aunt. Challenge to Academy In 1922 Dali gained admission to the San Fernando Academy. Here he experimented with several painting styles, primarily Cubism, Futurism and Purism. He felt unchallenged by his instructors at the Academy. His tendency to challenge the authority of the Academy and to encourage his peers to do the same, led to disciplinary actions and eventually to his dismissal. In May 1923 Dali was arrested in his hometown for separatist activities and transferred to a prison in Girona where he was forced to spend a month. He viewed the time spent in prison as an incident, "to add a lively colour to the already highly coloured sequence of the anecdotic episodes of my life". He returned to the Academy in 1926, but was permanently expelled shortly before his final exams for declaring that no one on the faculty was competent enough to examine him. Following his dismissal, Dali returned to Figueres and devoted himself to painting. Dali's paintings became associated with three general themes: depicting a measure of man's universe and his sensations; the use of collage; and objects charged with sexual symbolism, and ideographic imagery. Paris Dream Dali made his first visit to Paris in April of 1926. In Paris, he met with Pablo Picasso, whom the young Dali revered. Dali did a number of works heavily influenced by Picasso over the next few years as he moved toward developing his own style. At this point, some trends in Dali's work that would continue throughout his life were already evident. Dali

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devoured influences of all styles of art he could find and then produced works ranging from the most academically classic to the most cutting edge grade. In 1929, Dali partnered with his friend, Luis Bunuel, to create a short film titled 'An Andalusian Dog ,' a 16-minute surrealist film. Dali was mainly responsible for helping Bunuel to write the script for the film. The film has no plot, in the normal sense of the word. The chronology of the film is disjointed. It uses dream logic, presenting a series scenes that attempt to shock the viewer. The film opens with a scene in which a woman's eye is slit by a razor. In subsequent scenes, a man's hand has a hole in the palm from which ants are emerging . Thus the film consisting of a series of short scenes of unexplained violence and rotting corpses. The widespread acclaim for the film among the European countries elevated the two to international fame and brought Dali to Paris. In particular, the surrealists took notice of Dali and Bunuel, welcoming them to their artistic circle. In 1930, Dali bought a tiny fishing cottage on a small bay at Port Lligat, the eastern most point of Spain where he lived and worked for most of his life. Muse LoveOne day surrealist poet Paul Éluard and his wife Gala, visited the emerging Salvador Dali. An affair developed between Gala and Dali. Dali was about 10 years younger than Gala. Gala was a muse for Dali, who said that she was the one who saved him from madness and an early death. Behind his artistic genius Dali was a troubled and disorganised man, and it was Gala who acted as his ruthless agent, the interface between the genius and the real world. Nonetheless, Dali recognized that his future as an artist would be greatly enhanced if he were married to a woman such as Gala who could promote him and manage his business affairs. Both were married in 1934." The Persistence of Memory" The idea came to Dali when one day he was staring <https://assignbuster.com/salvador-dali-biography-a-mad-fantasy-film-studies-essay/>

at a runny piece of Camembert cheese during a hot day in August. He was also impressed by Einstein's conclusion that that time is relative and not fixed. Thus In 1931, Dali painted one of his most famous works, " The Persistence of Memory". Sometimes called Melting watches, the work introduced the surrealistic images of the soft, melting pocket watches. It was during 1934 that Surrealists started becoming hugely leftist and Dali rejected becoming a part of the relationship drawn between art and politics. He faced an insult in the hands of Breton, a French writer, poet, and surrealist theorist. He was the main founder of surrealism, who coined the term " Avida Dollars", which means, " greedy for dollars". This was a direct punch for Dali as his works were pointed as commercial works. It was being perceived that Dali wanted all the fame and fortune and there were surrealists who started speaking about Dali as if he was dead. Dali's departure from the Surrealists marked the end of his affiliation with artistic groups and movements.

Through the rest of his life he remained independent as an artist, working in his own style and exploring his own introspective and paranoiac avenues. In 1935 in his essay " The Conquest of the Irrational", according to Dali, objects have a minimum of mechanical meaning, but when viewed from mind, it shows phantom images which are the result of unconscious acts. The paranoiac-critical therefore arose from similar Surrealistic experiments with psychology and the creation of images such as Max Ernst's frottage technique, which involved rubbing pencil or chalk over on paper over a textured surface and interpreting the phantom images visible in the texture on the paper. The aspect of paranoia that Dali was interested in and which helped inspire the method was the ability of the brain to perceive links

between things which rationally are not linked. Dali described the paranoiac-
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critical method as a "spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on the critical and systematic objectivity of the associations and interpretations of delirious phenomena." The 1940s brought about many changes in Dali's life and art. The civil war that had devastated Spain in the late 1930s was over, but a new war was on the horizon. As the Nazis prepared to invade France, Dali and Gala fled to the United States in self-imposed exile, as did many other artists during the Second World War. Both lived there for 8 years. Dali was well known by the American public and very popular with American collectors as well.