

The persistence of memory



The Persistence of Memory Image: http://totallyhistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/The_Persistence_of_Memory.jpg Salvador Dali Word Count: 781 References: <http://salvadoralipaintings.org/the-meaning-of-the-persistence-of-memory> [http://www.salvador-dali.org/media/upload/arxiu/Amics/PersisAnglWeb\(1\).pdf](http://www.salvador-dali.org/media/upload/arxiu/Amics/PersisAnglWeb(1).pdf) http://www.authenticociety.com/about/ThePersistenceOfMemory_Dali The Persistence of Memory by Salvador Dali depicts an obscure landscape characterized with clocks melting over illogical objects, ashore a coastline with jagged cliffs, and a sweeping horizon.

The foreground of the landscape is inland of the distant shore and cliffs. It is isolated and desert like, giving no indication of human life or activity. There are a total of four clocks, three of the clocks portray times and appear melted. The first clock is draped over the limb of a dead and barren Olive tree. The second clock hangs over the edge of a rectangular mass that could be the edge of a table or a flat roof top and has a fly on it. The third clock is draped over an unidentifiable and flesh-toned being.

The bottom half of this clock falls behind the being, so the hour cannot be estimated. The fourth watch is face-down, showing no time and it is covered by ants. The background is a blend of the horizon meeting the sea. The shoreline is connected to a jagged cliff in the upper right corner and a second flat- rectangular mass on the left side of the painting. Through personal expression Dali created The Persistence of Memory. The painting can be classified as a landscape or a self-portrait. The painting is an enigma and inspiration from Dali's interpretation of his own dreams and memories.

The coast line and rocky landscape represent the background of his childhood hometown in Port Lligat, Spain. The memory of his childhood hometown and memory of the landscape serves as the foundation of this painting and links his past to the present. The two square forms correlate with the landscape and resemble roof tops of neighboring homes. The clocks all epitomize time figuratively. Each one renders details of time correlating to around the same time of day, between 6: 00 or 7: 00 and express a feeling of nostalgia for a memory of that moment.

Each clock inspires creative catchphrases that attribute to their possible meaning. The clock hanging over the dead olive tree can be translated as time goes on even while we are just hanging around. The clock with the fly on it, epitomizes that time flies. The clock that is face down with ants all over it, symbolizes death and that time is over. The last clock covers the life-like mass that is speculated to be the profile of Dali in a self-portrait in the embryonic stage of life.

The theme of this painting correlates around time. The four clocks provide significant indication by each representing their own meaning and indicating that time is always relevant. There is an effective use of positive and negative space. The landscape shows depth and distance. The dominant masses that make up the foreground are balanced out by the bright light on the cliffs on the beach. The darker color that is apparent in the right foreground is indicative of a shadow.

The shadows that are depicted throughout the painting, the almost golden color of the sunlight, and times indicated on the clocks portray the time of day to be in the early evening. The warm colors used in this composition

make a good contrast of the blue and yellow. The values of the dark and light areas make this painting well balanced. The lines silhouette the forms, as well as the surfaces and give the viewer a sense of smooth texture and dreamlike. The directional forces of the lines guide the eye in all areas of the painting, prominently diagonally left to right.

The composition as a whole appears balanced. The asymmetrical balance is achieved with the use of warm and dark tones and balanced by the heavier and more complex forms. The unity and rhythm provide repetition and by painting the clocks alike in an area close to each other, they are balanced. The unity Dali uses makes the painting captive and finished. Even though the painting is Surreal it has a good sense of balance and harmony. Dali's creative and eccentric use of common objects to symbolize his dreams and memories has captured my imagination to attempt my own translation of his painting. I have never been an admirer of Salvador Dali's artwork but I could recognize his artwork, by the melting clocks. I have always considered it odd and pointless. However, after studying The Persistence of Memory and gaining insight about the behavior of Salvador Dali, he is now one of my favorite artists. Understanding him as a person has enabled my comprehension of his artwork. Dali does not try to influence the meaning or understanding of his art and allows for the viewer to perceive their own understanding.