

# "the persistence of memory" and dali's search for truth essay



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Salvador Dali's "The Persistence of Memory" (1931) is one of the most recognized surrealist paintings of the era. Dali's painting uses browns, yellows and blues to depict the landscape and the fading, melting timepieces that are the signature of the piece. He sticks with the basic color palette, excluding shades of green. He manages to depict the barren landscape of the desert, with the clocks melting off the edge of a box

The lack of green in the painting helps depict the hopelessness of the scene and the ever-flowing nature of time. "The Persistence of Time" as a surrealist painting has an almost life-like background, a pseudo-realistic portrayal of a desert scene with plateau rising up in the background. But in the foreground of the painting, Dali steps away from reality and depicts flowing and melting timepieces and a box upon which a dead, barren tree depicted in grays and whites stands.

At first glance, one might only see the barren tree in the desert, but once a more attentive look is taken at the painting, it becomes clear that the watch and clock faces on the desert are a statement about the passage of time. When added to the title of the piece, the odd clocks added to a landscape make the painting clearly unrelated to traditional reality. Dali's work clearly depicts the post-modernist theories that art does not have to reflect reality as it is observed. Instead, the surrealists portray truth as it is and perhaps the unseen aspects of truth.