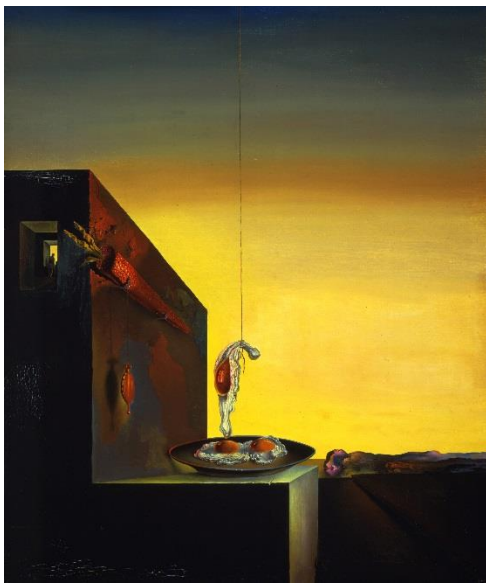


THE SECRET OF THE HANGING EGG: SALVADOR DALÍ AT THE MENIL

Museum reinstalls celebrated Surrealist galleries to create dialogue with Dalí



HOUSTON, TX, October 29, 2015 – Visitors to the Menil Collection will have a rare opportunity this fall to experience works from the museum’s Surrealist collection in dialogue with one of the movement’s major figures – Salvador Dalí. On loan from the Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, the artist’s 1932 painting, *Eggs on the Plate Without the Plate*, will greet viewers on a wall by itself as they enter the first of three galleries reinstalled for this special exhibition. Curated by Assistant Curator Clare Elliott and consisting of some 30 works by 12 artists, *The Secret of the Hanging Egg: Salvador Dalí at the Menil* opens on November 5, 2015 and will remain on view through June 19 of next year.

“The generosity of the Dalí Museum allows us not only to bring this exceptional painting to Houston audiences, but also to create a new framework through which to view the Menil’s extensive Surrealist collection,” said Clare Elliott, assistant curator.

With a selection of works by artists such as Victor Brauner, Max Ernst, and René Magritte, the museum enjoys a reputation for having an exceptional representation of Surrealist art – the twentieth-century avant-garde movement in art and literature that sought to release the creative potential of the unconscious mind. Visitors, however, are often surprised to learn that the museum has no paintings by Dalí, only *Gangsterism and Goofy Visions of New York* – a rarely seen 1935 drawing that will also appear in the show.

Though indelibly linked to Surrealism, Dalí was both accepted and later rejected by the movement's leader, André Breton (whose death mask is on view in an adjacent gallery).

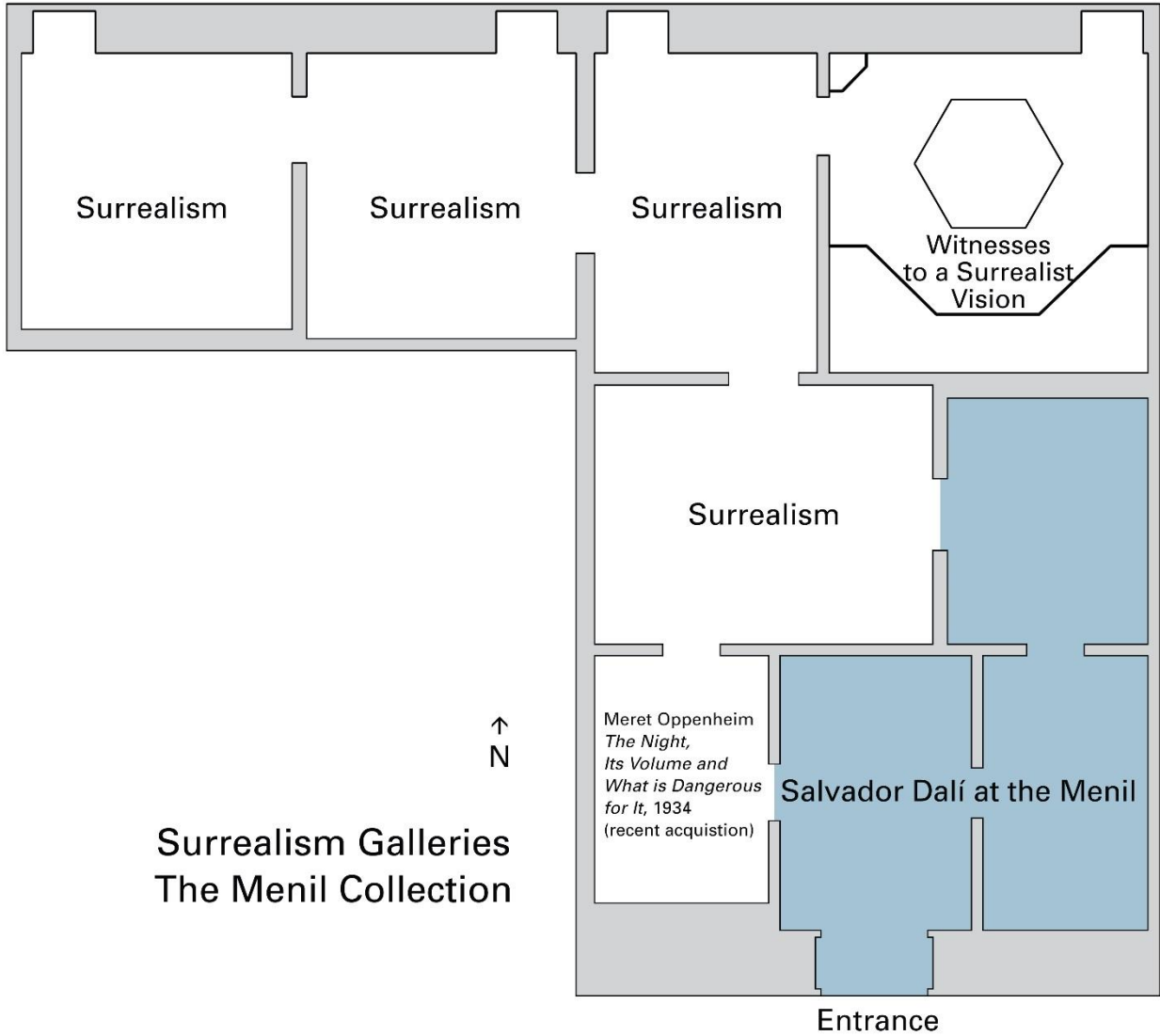
With its eerie landscape and an even more disquieting still life that includes one of Dalí's most familiar motifs, a watch that appears to be melting, *Eggs on a Plate Without the Plate* engages in conversation with other works that include small, egg-like painted rocks by Brauner and Joan Miró, as well as enigmatic landscapes by Yves Tanguy and Joseph Cornell. A painting attributed to Giuseppe Arcimboldo, a sixteenth-century Italian painter that Dalí admired, provides an antecedent to the artist's surreal imaginings.

Dalí's fascination with food is echoed in simulacrum of cheese made by his contemporary Magritte and by the contemporary artist Robert Gober. Works by the latter, as well as a new work made especially for the exhibition by Houston-based artist David McGee, attest to the continuation of the Surrealist tradition both in present-day artistic practices and in the Menil's holdings. Steve Wolfe, the subject of a 2010 Menil exhibition, also appears in the reconfigured galleries. On view are examples of Dalí's many collaborations with Surrealists in Paris in the 1930s in the form of a selection of rare publications from the Menil's library, including *Violette Nozières* (1933) and a 1937 portfolio of twenty-one Surrealist postcards. As the centerpiece of this exhibition, the Dalí painting strongly resonates with a collection that emphasizes the power of the evocative image.

Surrealism at the Menil

With a collection of more than 300 Surrealist paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, the museum can only display a fraction of its holdings at any one time, and this exhibition highlights the practice of quietly rotating works throughout the permanent galleries. Next door to Dali, visitors will find *The Night, Its Volume and What is Dangerous for It*, 1934, a recently acquired painting by Meret Oppenheim, one of the movement's pioneering female artists, as well as Man Ray's erotic portrait of the artist.

This exhibition is generously supported by the City of Houston.



Public Programs

The World of Salvador Dalí

Wednesday, November 11, 7:00 p.m.

Independent scholar Danielle Johnson explores both Dalí's work and his often flamboyant life.

Un chien andalou (1929) and L'âge d'or (1930)

Friday, February 12, 7:00 p.m.

Written by Dalí and directed by Luis Buñuel, these two classics of Surrealist cinema retain their ability to shock and confound nearly a century after their release.

All public programs are free and open to the public. Menil members enjoy additional programs and events, including a December 4th noontime gallery talk with exhibition curator Clare Elliott. Visit the museum or menil.org for more information

About the Menil Collection

A legacy of the late philanthropists John and Dominique de Menil, the Menil Collection opened in 1987. The main museum building anchors the 30-acre campus, which includes the Cy Twombly Gallery, a site-specific Dan Flavin installation at Richmond Hall, Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's *Infinity Machine* on view at the Byzantine Fresco Chapel (BFC), and outdoor sculpture. Presenting rotations of artworks from the growing permanent collection, the Menil also organizes special exhibitions and programs throughout the year, publishes scholarly books, and conducts research into the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11am to 7pm, and charges no admission fee.

Image: Salvador Dalí, *Eggs on the Plate without the Plate (Œufs sur le Plat sans le Plat)*, 1932. Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 × 16 1/2 in. (60.3 × 41.9 cm). Collection of the Salvador Dali Museum, Inc. St. Petersburg, Florida. © Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York 2015

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