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Summer 1999

Surrealism

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Press release

SURREALISM: TWO PRIVATE EYES
THE NESUHI ERTEGUN AND DANIEL FILIPACCHI COLLECTIONS
OPENS AT THE GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM IN JUNE 1999

**First Major New York Exhibition of Surrealist Art in Thirty Years
Will Feature More Than 700 Works by Cornell, Dalí, de Chirico, Ernst,
Kahlo, Magritte, Man Ray, and Others**

Press Preview: Thursday, June 3, 1999, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York City
Remarks begin at 11:30 a.m.



From June 4 to September 12, 1999, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum presents *Surrealism: Two Private Eyes, The Nesuhi Ertegun and Daniel Filipacchi Collections*. The exhibition is drawn from the collections of Daniel Filipacchi and the late Nesuhi Ertegun, long-time friends who assembled two of the most important private holdings of Surrealist art. The landmark exhibition will feature approximately 700 objects, including many rarely seen Surrealist masterworks, and will fill the entire Frank Lloyd Wright Rotunda and several of the adjoining galleries.

This exhibition is made possible by the generous support of the Lagardère Group.
Additional support is provided by CIBC.

"The Ertegun and Filipacchi collections are among the largest and most important repositories of art and objects from the Surrealist movement," stated Thomas Krens, Director of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. "Although these collections grew in tandem over a period of nearly 50 years, this exhibition represents the first time they will be seen together. We are delighted to be able to present them at the Guggenheim, which has demonstrated a sustained commitment to Surrealist art."

Surrealism: Two Private Eyes, The Nesuhi Ertegun And Daniel Filipacchi Collections

features the work of Paris-based Surrealists Hans Bellmer, Giorgio de Chirico, Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, René Magritte, Man Ray, André Masson, and Yves Tanguy, as well as work by prominent figures from elsewhere in Europe and North and South America, including Joseph Cornell, Frida Kahlo, Joan Miró, and Remedios. The exhibition includes paintings, photographs, sculptures, works on paper, books, and unique manuscripts. Of particular note is the collections' emphasis on original manuscripts, first-edition books, and bindings, all of which point toward the literary heritage of Surrealism.

Many of the works in the exhibition incorporate the experimental games and techniques pioneered by the Surrealists. These include automatism (the practice of attempting to suspend conscious control of the painting or drawing process), cadavre exquis (a game in which three or more artists would collaborate on a single work, without seeing what the other artists had created until the work was finished), decalcomania (the creation of unique, textured designs by spreading paint onto a flat surface of paper or canvas, pressing a second piece of paper or canvas onto the coated surface, and then separating the two pieces of paper or canvas), and frottage (the technique of rubbing, usually with a pencil or crayon, on paper that has been placed over a textured surface or object).

With its emphasis on the unconscious and chance effects, Surrealism offered aesthetic possibilities that profoundly influenced the course of twentieth-century art. Founded in 1924 on the philosophy of French poet André Breton, Surrealism attempted to give

objective reality to Sigmund Freud's notions of repressed desires and the unconscious mind. Works by the Surrealists often featured bizarre dream-like imagery and disquieting depictions of everyday life. Not so much a style as a set of attitudes and beliefs that influenced the arts, philosophy, and society, Surrealism created novel ways of looking at and thinking of reality.

Historically, the Guggenheim Museum has had a long involvement with Surrealism, as reflected in the museum's outstanding holdings from the period. Peggy Guggenheim, through her collecting interests and her marriage to Max Ernst, was a direct participant in the Surrealist movement. The Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice holds a rich assortment of Surrealist masterworks, with many seminal works by key figures in the movement. With the exhibition of the Ertegun and Filipacchi collections, the museum now offers exceptional insight into the artistic and literary aspects of Surrealism.

Among the artists featured in the exhibition are Giorgio de Chirico, a pivotal inspiration for the Surrealists, whose enigmatic paintings often depict mysterious figures set against illusionary townscapes; Salvador Dalí, a controversial and flamboyant figure who is best-known for his hallucinatory and incongruous imagery; Frida Kahlo, the Mexican painter, who reflects the international reach of the Surrealist movement; and René Magritte, whose created extraordinary and bizarre juxtapositions of familiar objects.

Organization

The exhibition was organized by Thomas Krens, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Tracey Bashkoff, Assistant Curator, and Karole P.B. Vail, Project Curatorial Assistant, with the assistance of Lisa Dennison, Deputy Director and Chief Curator. The exhibition was designed by Richard Peduzzi, exhibition and theater designer and Director, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, with assistance from Cécile Degos, theater designer.

Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated, two-volume boxed catalogue published by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and distributed through Harry N. Abrams Inc.

Surrealism: Two Private Eyes, The Nesuhi Ertegun and Daniel Filipacchi Collections includes an interview with Daniel Filipacchi by David Sylvester and texts by Jacques Baron, Timothy Baum, Rosalind Krauss, José Pierre, Werner Spies, and Jean Toulet. The creative director of the exhibition catalogue is Agnès Cruz. The hard-cover edition of the catalogue costs \$95, and the soft-cover costs \$49.95.

Public Programs

Public programs are organized and supported by the Sackler Center for Arts Education at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, a major facility for the museum's education initiatives. Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and are free with museum admission.

Daily Tours

"Highlights of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum" is offered daily at noon. It explores the history and architecture of the museum, as well as the highlights of the permanent collection. "*Surrealism: Two Private Eyes, The Nesuhi Ertegun and Daniel Filipacchi Collections*" is offered daily at 2 and 4 p.m. The hour-long tour explores these two important collections of Surrealist art, focusing on the vision and innovative techniques of the artists represented in the exhibition. On Sundays, June 13, July 18, and August 22, this tour is interpreted for deaf and hearing-impaired visitors by a certified sign-language interpreter.

"A Curatorial Eye" presents Guggenheim Museum curators offering guided tours of the exhibitions they helped to create. Featured curators for this exhibition are Tracey Bashkoff, Assistant Curator, on June 18 and July 23, and Karole P.B. Vail, Project Curatorial

Assistant, on July 9 and August 13. Each tour is limited to 30 people, with reservations taken at the information desk one hour prior to the start of the program. Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) are available and have been made possible through public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. Support has also been provided by a generous grant from the Sprint Foundation.

Lectures and Symposia

Various noted scholars will participate in a Tuesday evening film and lecture series on the subject of Surrealist film. The series is organized and will be introduced by John Hanhardt, Senior Curator of Film and Media Arts. All presentations are at 7 p.m in the Peter B. Lewis Theater. Tickets are available one month prior to each event and may be purchased during museum hours at the admission desk.

On June 22, Dudley Andrew, Professor of Cinema Studies, Yale University, will present "Imagine What These Hands Have Done": Manipulations of Surrealist Cinema." On June 29, P. Adams Sitney, Professor of Visual Arts, Princeton University, will present "The Venus of Atlantis: Deren, Nin, and Surrealist Cinema." On July 27, Fatimah Tobing Rony, Assistant Professor of Film Studies, University of California, Irvine, will present "Disrupted Realities: Surrealism, the Ethnographic, and Found-Footage Film." On September 7, Angela Della Vacche, Assistant Professor, Film Studies Program, Emory University, will present "The Surrealist Sensibility: International Comparisons and Contrasts."

A related film series, "The Mexperimental Cinema," on view from June 23 to July 28, includes an examination of Mexican experimental cinema's affinities to the films of European Surrealists and traces the influence of noted Surrealist filmmaker Luis Bunuel on Mexican directors.

Informal slide talks will also be presented in conjunction with the exhibition. These programs take place on select Fridays at noon in the Peter B. Lewis Theater, and are free

with museum admission. On June 25, Pearl Erlich will speak on "Surrealism and the Femme Fatale." On July 9, Paul Werner will speak on "Writing Surrealist Writing."

Programs for Families

On Sunday, July 24, at 2 p.m., a museum docent will lead a family tour of *Surrealism: Two Private Eyes, The Nesuhi Ertegun and Daniel Filipacchi Collections*, after which teaching artist Jon Cassotta will conduct a hands-on art workshop. Children will work on making personal box constructions like those of artist Joseph Cornell, who is featured in the exhibition. This program is \$10 per child (\$5 for members), plus museum admission. Enrollment is limited to 20 children (ages 7 to 12). Pre-registration is required; please call (212) 423-3587.

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For press information: Betsy Ennis
Senior Publicist
Telephone: 212/423-3842
Telefax: 212/941-8410
E-mail: bennis@guggenheim.org

Front: Detail from *Le surréalisme et la peinture (Surrealism and Painting)* by André Breton (1928), bound 1934, leather and mixed media, 24.8 x 20.3 x 4.1 cm. Binder: Paul Bonet