

# Salvador Dalí and Hans Arp The Birth of Memory

(16 February 2020 – 16 August 2020)



Salvador Dalí, *Dream Caused by the Flight of a Bee Around a Pomegranate a Second Before Awakening*, 1944, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2019

**Press conference: Friday, 14 February 2020, 11 a.m.**

**Exhibition opening: Sunday, 16 February 2020, 11 a.m.**

Rolandseck, 18 September 2019

## Press information

### »Salvador Dalí and Hans Arp. The Birth of Memory«

16 February 2020 until 16 August 2020

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*Let's leave Picasso aside. We should come to a better understanding with Arp, who provides for us a huge range of realizations with an almost imperceptible naturalness.*

**Salvador Dalí**

**Salvador Dalí (1904–1989) is regarded ‘the’ Surrealist per se. The exhibition »Salvador Dalí and Hans Arp. The Birth of Memory« endeavours to examine previously unknown facets of his oeuvre and reveals an extremely versatile artist in whom memory and future meet. In this great-scale project, the parallels in the work of contemporaries Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) and Hans Arp (1886-1966) are examined for the first time in a museal context. Both artists developed a unique and individual pictorial language in the circle of Parisian surrealists. As a founding member of the DADA movement, Arp shares Dalí’s sense of a bizarre and enigmatic humour. This humour becomes apparent in the often symbolic play with everyday objects and the human figure typical for both artists’ works. It also characterizes Arp’s lyrical oeuvre, which in dialogue with Dalí lets us perceive his painting in a new light.**

#### **Surrealist Rendez-vous: Hans Arp and Salvador Dalí**

Continuing our successful exhibition series *Rendez-vous des amis*, our museum’s patron Hans Arp will receive a particularly illustrious guest in 2020: Salvador Dalí. The two artists met about ninety years ago when Dalí became a member of the circle of Parisian surrealists around André Breton. Arp had already caused a sensation at that time with his innovative reliefs. Their object language reveals numerous parallels to the inventory of Dalí’s paintings. The two artists not only bare parallels in the reinterpretation of everyday objects and their mingling with human bodies, their formal vocabulary frequently reveals an unimagined closeness as well. Thus Arp’s soft flowing ovals often appear as if arisen directly from a painting by Dalí. Dalí’s surreal, often seemingly oppressive pictorial worlds assume a new dimension and lightness in the juxtaposition with Jean Arp’s playful poetry. Shown in a dialogue with one of Surrealism’s most prominent exponents, Arp’s works demonstrate the decisive extent to which he influenced this style. For the first time, this aspect of his oeuvre is focused in an exhibition.

## **Salvador Dalí – Ludwig van Beethoven: Two radical artists**

Like Ludwig van Beethoven, Salvador Dalí counts among the most radical artists of his time – eccentric, ingenious, innovative. He has become a veritable brand, covering the full spectrum of art in his epoch. His artistic heritage transgresses the boundaries of genres and manifests in painting and sculpture, in the applied arts, movies, books – and music, as in his opera poem »Être Dieu«.

Both were visionaries full of innovative capacities. The parallels between them are astonishing and it comes as no surprise that Dalí repeatedly refers to Beethoven. His fascination for the musical genius already manifests in his first memoirs: Dalí describes a childhood memory, in which he suddenly perceives the Beethoven's head in a cloudy sky after a storm. It is a vision so impressive that he later records it in drawings, sculptures and even a medal. To no other artist does he refer so often as to Beethoven.

The Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck has ever since been a place for art and music alike. In 2020, the year of Beethoven's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday a series of concerts accompanying the exhibition will present contemporary interpretations of Beethoven's music, resonating in Dalí's fascinating surreal cosmos.

## **Surreal – digital – virtual**

Salvador Dalí can be considered a multimedia artist par excellence. He always strived to transgress the boundaries of art. To make the viewer experience art in a new and all-embracing way, he makes use of the most diverse technical possibilities. Early on, he experiments with film (e.g. *Le chien andalou*, 1928/29 and *L'age d'or*, 1930) to make his surreal worlds come alive. Also interested in animated movies, he started a collaboration with Walt Disney for the short film *Destino*. A selection of Dalí's movies will be shown in the exhibition.

Besides his focus on painting, Dalí created performances and theatrical stagings that appeal to all senses, enthralling and sometimes perplexing the viewer. Moreover, he is particularly fascinated by the third dimension. Never content with the two-dimensionality of the canvas, he wants his art to unfold entire worlds for the viewer to completely immerse in.

In an innovative, unique take on Dalí's multimedia qualities, we explore this facet of his art and take it into the future with today's technical possibilities: Augmented Reality turns the environment in front of the museum into a surreal dream landscape which can be discovered through a telescope. This innovative project is made possible by a cooperation of the Arp Museum and the department of media design of the University of Mainz.

## Exhibition Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue (English/German). All of the exhibited works will be reproduced in full-page illustrations. The publication features essays by Heinz Joachim Kummer, Astrid von Asten, Karl Böhmer, Oliver Kornhoff and Sarah-Lena Schuster. The catalogue will be published at StrzeleckiBooks.

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