

WILLIAM BENNETT

GALLERY

Dalí

The Surreal Universe of
Salvador Dalí

65 GREENE STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10012 | TEL: 212-965-8707

www.williamsbennettgallery.com



ARIES

In Dalí's interpretation of the ram, the symbol for Aries, the ram is adventurous, energetic and headstrong. Dalí follows the traditional association by depicting the ram in the sunlight as if about to set off on an adventure.



GEMINI

This dual sign is an opportunity for Dalí to use the language of Surrealism, which he helped invent in the 1920's. Joining two separate figures with one head, Dalí defines the duality, the light and dark, the positive and negative forces Gemini embodies. The figure is a dream come to life.



TAURUS

Here Dalí shows the bull in all his glory. This magnificent animal asserts his place, perseverant in its upward climb to achieve the security it longs for. Dalí urges us not to clash with the ambitions of a Taurus that is hard, if not impossible, to budge.



CANCER

Dali adds new vigor to the traditional image of cancer as an incredibly tenacious decapod, with powerful claws. As with all of Dalí's Zodiac related art, here he shows the sign's multiple aspects. Cancers are hard on the outside yet have a vulnerable interior.

TWELVE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC

The bas reliefs are vivid expressions of the 12 signs of the zodiac – Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. Each offers Dalí's impressive interpretations of these popular signs. For Dalí, the zodiac was a gateway to the mysteries of human nature. Each iconic image reflects its place in the zodiac, and Dalí's search beyond the gate. Each is a unique work of art, a collector's item for Dalí connoisseurs. In the late 1960's, Leon Amiel, a well-known publisher of Dalí's works, commissioned Dalí to create the molds for each of the 12 signs of the Zodiac based on Dalí's Zodiac gouaches and lithographs. Amiel then sold the rights to these to R.H. Brown & Co. Finally after almost 40 years having passed since the creation of the original molds, the bronze sculptures were at last produced in a limited edition in 2010.



LEO

In Dalí's work, Leo comes alive as a proud yet playful feline. This lion enjoys the sunlight but is capable of great rage. The sensual love of pleasure and playful qualities, his tail wags gracefully, his head sways and for a moment, his anger is tucked away.

VIRGO

The only female figure in the Zodiac, Virgo, in Dalí's understanding, is an independent maiden, or virgin, linked to ancient goddesses, service and healing. Head covered she grasps a staff, connecting her to the earth. This sensuous goddess-like symbol reminds us that Dalí studied ancient Greek and Roman mythology



LIBRA

Another unique image - the only inanimate object in the series - the scales embody the quest for balance and harmony. And Dalí respects that quest, though it was inimicable to his provocative nature. Note how Dalí centers the scales amidst birds in the sky as the Sun begins to travel through the balance of the Autumn Equinox in late September when day and night are of equal length.

SCORPIO

Dalí's vision of Scorpio shows Dalí at his most inventive. Not satisfied with the usual representation of the deadly arthropod, Dalí shows an intense and brooding image, dominant in its space that borders on the abstract. Like the others in the series, this image captures the sign's rich meaning.





SAGITTARIUS

A centaur - half-man, half horse - Sagittarius exemplifies paradox, a theme which absorbed Dalí through his life. Here the figure shoots hopefully at an unknown target. Like Dalí himself, with ambitions, dreams and hopes, the figure seems eager to explore faraway places.

CAPRICORN

This fantastic image - a sea goat with a body of a goat and a fish tail - unites usually separate realms. For Dalí, an artist's work imagines a world beyond the usual. Here the mythical creature seems ready to bridge the unconscious gap between sea and land, between spiritual wisdom and the practical.

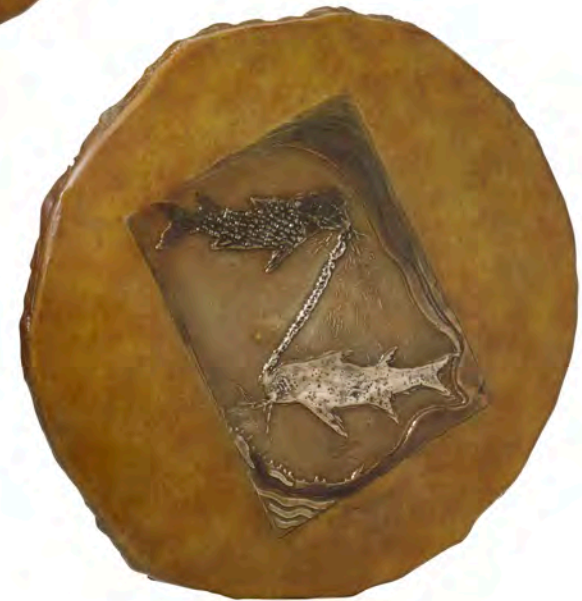


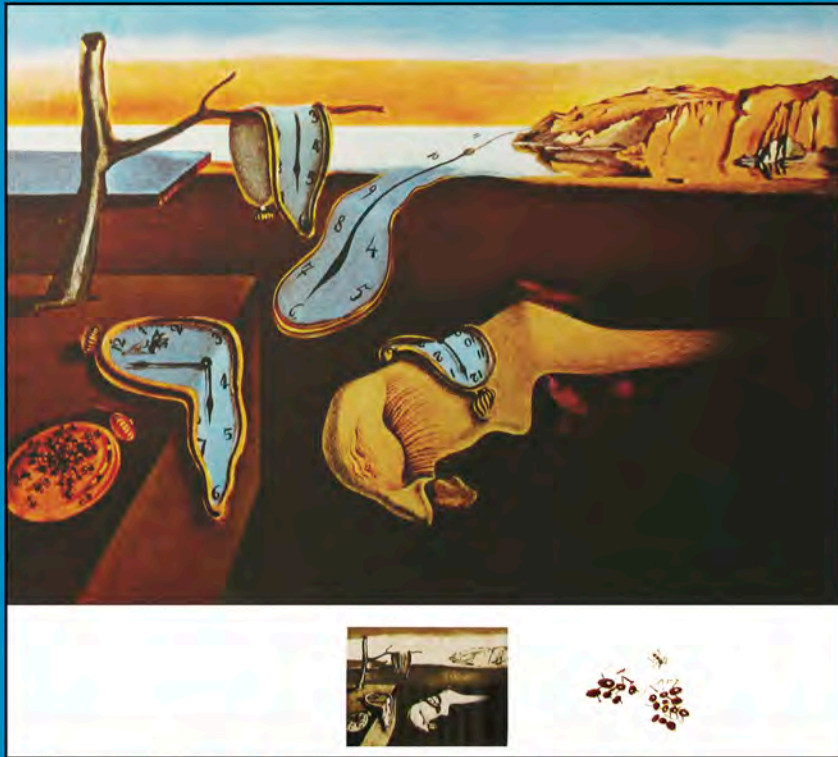
AQUARIUS

An ancient figure, Aquarius generously pours water from a vessel onto the land. As Aquarius pours, there is contemplation and awareness of the world. Here Dalí captures the essence of the symbol - an independent thinker, analyzing everything that contributes to the environment by an outpouring of mental energy and original ideas.

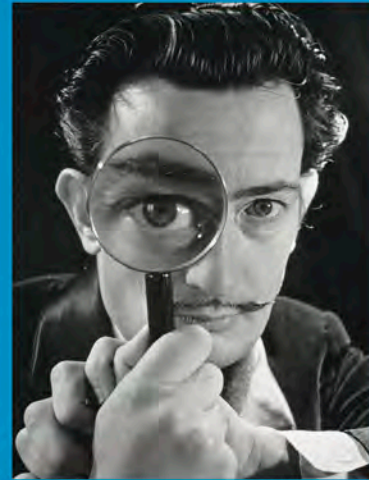
PISCES

A dual sign, like Gemini, its sign is about the struggle between two aspects of human nature as symbolized in the two distinctive fishes swimming in opposite directions. But Dalí re-imagines and reconciles the traditional conflict between the spiritual and personal goals by connecting and balancing the fishes. For Dalí, conflict is an opportunity for creative unity.





Persistence of Memory from Changes in Great Masterpieces



A modern master of the surreal arts, Salvador Dalí's works continually challenged convention by questioning the antithesis of surrealism: our normal sense of the "real." Surrealism's objective was to make accessible to art the realms of the unconscious, irrational and imaginary. An expansive movement that extended beyond the canvas, Surrealism embraced literature, music, cinema, philosophy and popular culture. Dalí's works drew inspiration from fellow Surrealists, such as Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst, Joan Miró and Yves Tanguy, and also from old European masters like Giuseppe Arcimboldo, Giovanni Bracelli and Antoni Gaudí.

Dalí's Surrealist adventures began in 1929 when he painted his first Surrealist painting, *The Lugubrious Game*. His painting style, which reflects his academic training in its precise, almost photographic realism, transformed Surrealism by the early 1930s. Inspired by psychoanalytical writings of Sigmund Freud, Dalí believed that his detailed illusionism was instrumental in the exploration of the dream imagery and the subconscious that he painted.

Dalí's works depict a highly provocative pictorial language that illustrate his imagery into painted metaphors. Iconic images such as a melting clock, the burning giraffe and swarming ants are all keys that Dalí offers the viewer to try and unlock his cryptic images.

Dalí was a theatrical and provocative persona among the Parisian Surrealists. During his extended career, Dalí participated in the production of ten films, three theater productions, two operas and nine ballets. As a perpetual performer himself, Dalí naturally cultivated friendships with those in the entertainment world such as Harpo Marx, Alfred Hitchcock and Walt Disney.

Of all his diverse techniques, Dalí was perhaps at his most virtuosic when it came to printmaking. The artist made over fifteen hundred prints during the course of his lifetime, fifty seven of which were created during the 1930's, the key decade for his artistic development. Most of Dalí's prints from this era appeared as illustrations in books by fellow Surrealists like Andre Bretón and Paul Eluard, among others. In 1930 Dalí illustrated *Les Chants de Maldoror*, in which he used a stream-of-consciousness process to access personal hallucinations and delusions. These visions ultimately replaced what was described in the book, once again putting Dalí on stage.

Dalí